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A HISTORY
OF
THE MIDDLE AGES,

FROM THE OVERTHROW OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE IN 476 TO THE
COMMENCEMENT OF THE CRUSADES IN 1096.

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P R E F A C E.

THE present work is intended as a continuation of my *Manual of Ancient History*. It has been undertaken at the suggestion of my deeply lamented friend, the late Lord Murray, who down to the last days of his life took a most kindly interest in its progress, and gave me every encouragement that personal friendship and a lively sense of the importance of the subject itself could devise.

I had hoped to be able to condense the whole of the history of the Middle Ages in one moderate volume, similar to that containing the history of antiquity ; but the overwhelming mass of materials, and the great interest naturally attaching to a portion of history so intimately connected with that of modern times, seemed to demand a fuller and more detailed treatment, if the work was to be of any real value, and not merely to swell the number of bare outlines or skeletons of medieval history, which I had no intention of doing. I accordingly resolved to confine myself to the portion of the history extending from the overthrow of the Western Empire to the Crusades (A.D. 476-1096). The volume, therefore, contains the history of a period of 620 years, during which the foundations of almost all modern states were laid. For those who love to trace our modern institutions to their first beginnings, this period cannot fail to be of deep interest.

In collecting the materials for this work, I have in many instances availed myself of contemporary authorities, and where they were inaccessible to me, I have consulted the best modern works. The book will in one sense be found a complete history of the period it embraces, inasmuch as nothing that is of real importance has been entirely passed over; in other respects, I aimed at no more than an introduction to the study of medieval history; for, not to mention minor points, which are noticed very briefly, even the more important events could not be treated with that minuteness of detail so essential to the thorough student of history. My object will be fully attained, if the work shall contribute in any way to create an interest in a department of history which seems to be too much neglected in this country, at least so far as foreign nations are concerned. The present time, when the nations of all Europe are tempted by the extraordinary facilities of intercourse, to cultivate a closer acquaintance with one another, and study one another's history, habits, and institutions, more than at any other period, seems urgently to demand that, at least in our higher educational establishments, some attention should be paid to medieval history; our age further appears to be more given to historical studies than the past generation, and nothing seems to be wanting but a suitable introduction to lead the student on to a more detailed investigation of medieval history, which, to the modern statesman and politician, is of far more importance than the study of Greek and Roman history.

L. S.

EDINBURGH, *May* 1865.



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HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

BOOK I.

FROM THE DOWNFAL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE TO
THE ERA OF THE CARLOVINGIANS, FROM 476 TO 768.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE term Middle Ages, signifying the period intervening between antiquity and modern times, is generally understood to embrace the history from the downfall of the Western Empire in A.D. 476, down to the great events which, during the second half of the fifteenth century, and the beginning of the sixteenth, have wrought such changes in the political, social, religious, and intellectual condition of Europe, as to warrant us in regarding them as the termination of one and the beginning of a new era in European history. The fall of the Western Empire, however, forms in reality an era in the history of those countries only which were directly affected by that event, that is, of the countries in south-western Europe ; for in the eastern parts of the empire, in Asia, the greater part of Africa, and even in the south-east of Europe, things went on for a considerable time longer without undergoing any material change, until the rise of Mahomedanism, in the beginning of the seventh century, produced effects destined not only to revolutionize Asia and Africa, but in the course of time to extend

their influence even over a considerable portion of southern Europe. While, therefore, in the east the medieval era does not commence until the first half of the seventh century, the most important countries of Europe must date the commencement of their medieval period from the end of the fifth ; and it is but natural that Europeans should adopt those eras which form the great landmarks in the history of their part of the globe.

The period, therefore, of which it is proposed to treat in this work, embraces little more than 1000 years, from A.D. 476 to 1517, that is, to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. It is customary in some quarters to designate this period in European history as the "Dark Ages," and it cannot be denied that in some respects the name is not undeserved, for during a considerable portion of that period the history of Europe presents a gloomy and dismal aspect, and is characterized by a profound ignorance of some of the most vital principles of human progress and happiness ; but it must be borne in mind that this could not be otherwise, and that we have no right to demand of those early ages what was reserved for later and more enlightened periods. During the first centuries of the middle ages, new nations and states were struggling into existence upon the ruins of the Roman empire and of Roman civilisation, and the intrusive elements, while they could not but destroy much of what was ancient and valuable, had to pass through a long process, in which they either were assimilated to the ancient elements, or ultimately came forth as distinct nationalities, with new institutions and ideas. During the latter half of the middle ages, however, much was produced that is noble and excellent, and it must be admitted that the whole of the medieval period was the season of planting and maturing the fruits which were reaped in the beginning of the sixteenth century. It would, therefore, be ignorant and ungrateful presumption to regard the middle ages as a

period of utter darkness, or as deserving to be looked upon with contempt or indifference.

The history of the middle ages is more closely and intimately connected with that of our own times than the best periods of antiquity : all our institutions, political, civil, social, and religious, have their origin in the middle ages, while they are only remotely connected with the civilisation of antiquity ; nay, we are so closely linked to the former that many of our most cherished institutions in Church and State are unintelligible mysteries to us, unless we borrow light from the history of the middle ages ; we can scarcely visit a town or village in Europe, in which we do not find ourselves surrounded by memorials of that period in the form of magnificent cathedrals, churches, palaces, and mansions of the great. From this it is manifest that all those to whom the administration of public affairs is intrusted, in whatever department that may be, cannot with safety move in any direction, unless they have at least a general knowledge of medieval history. The institutions, under which the nations of Europe live, are the fruits of a growth of more than a thousand years, and the results of an organic development, which can neither be arbitrarily checked nor precipitately hurried on without disastrous consequences.

CHAPTER I.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW KINGDOMS IN THE VARIOUS PARTS
OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

1. General effects of the German invasions ; 2. State of Christianity ;
3. Italy and Odoacer ; 4. The Ostrogoths and Theodoric the Great ;
5. The Ostrogoths after the death of Theodoric ; 6. Gaul after the fall
of the empire ; 7. Clovis ; 8. The Suevi in Spain ; 9. The Visigoths ;
10. Britain under the Anglo-Saxons ; 11. The kingdom of the Van-
dals ; 12. The kingdom of the Lombards ; 13. Concluding remarks.

1. During the invasions of the barbarians who had overrun the fair provinces of south-western Europe, many of the monuments of ancient civilisation were destroyed, but the foundations were laid for a new and different state of society. The things which then died away, had been decaying before, but those which still contained vitality lived on, only entering into a new form of existence, absorbing and assimilating the fresh and vigorous elements which were then introduced. The change, therefore, which was produced among the Romans and Romanized nations, was indeed a revolution, but not a complete transformation, such as that which took place in Britain when conquered by the Germanic tribes ; for the conquering barbarians in most cases overspread the empire only like a thin stratum, while the great underlying mass of the populations remained very like what it had been before. Hence in Italy, Gaul, and Spain, the Latin language continued to be spoken, being but little influenced by the tongues of the Teutonic invaders, and, above all, the free municipal institutions remained unchanged for centuries. The rough languages of the Goths, and afterwards of the Lombards, were indeed employed in poetical compositions, in drawing up laws, and in translating the Scriptures, but they, like the nations that spoke

them, were gradually absorbed and supplanted by the more highly civilized elements by which they were surrounded. A few centuries sufficed to efface almost every trace of the Teutonic languages in the south of Europe ; but wherever the German tribes mingled and amalgamated with the Italians and Romanized Celts or Iberians, they infused new blood, and gave a healthier tone to the character of the nations, refreshing and invigorating them with new views, new hopes, and new aspirations, and thereby enabled them to commence, as it were, a new life. This process, however, was slow, and it would almost seem as if it had been more difficult for the Germanic tribes in their mixture with Romanized elements, to reach a high degree of culture, than in an isolated condition when placed in favourable circumstances where their development was not checked by perpetual attacks from without. Such at least was the case in Britain, where the Anglo-Saxon race made more rapid progress in intellectual culture and civilisation than any of the kindred tribes, and in the course of a few centuries far eclipsed their brethren on the Continent.

2. At the time when the Western Empire was broken up, Christianity was established in all its provinces, both in the east and in the west ; some of the barbarians also had long since adopted the new religion. But the forms of Christianity were not the same everywhere ; for while Rome, Alexandria, and the Romanized inhabitants of the western provinces adhered to what was called the Catholic or orthodox belief, most of the barbarians, such as the Goths, Vandals, and Burgundians, were zealous supporters of the Arian heresy, which then rent all Christendom into two formidable factions. Some of the German invaders, such as the Franks, still clung to their ancient national religion. The ecclesiastical hierarchy had been forming gradually and almost imperceptibly ever since the time of Constantine, the bishops in the larger cities of the empire assuming authority over those in

the smaller towns. Such was the case at Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria, and the Bishop of Rome, the metropolis of the whole empire, naturally claimed for himself a dignity and authority possessed by no other ecclesiastical functionary. The respect paid to him was increased by the popular belief that he was the lawful successor of St. Peter, who was supposed to have been the first bishop of Rome. As early as A.D. 344, the Provincial Synod of Sardica, and again an imperial decree of Valentinian III., in A.D. 445, had declared the Bishop of Rome primate of all Christendom; but even in the west of Europe, for which these decrees were mainly intended, they met with strong opposition, and the primacy of the Roman bishop was not fully recognised until the eighth century.

3. At the time when Odoacer, with his hordes of Heruli, Rugii, Scyri, Turcilingi, and Gothi, made himself master of Italy, towards the end of the year 476, the Emperor Nepos, the predecessor of Romulus Augustulus, was still living in Dalmatia, and was looked upon by the Court of Constantinople as the lawful sovereign of the west, and it was he who conferred the title of patricius on Odoacer. The latter now governed Italy and the provinces on the south of the Danube in the name of the Emperor Nepos, as Ricimer had done before, until the 4th of May 480, when Nepos was murdered at Salona. This circumstance has led some modern historians to date the extinction of the Western Empire from 480, instead of from 476. As no new emperor was proclaimed at the time of the murder of Nepos, Odoacer, after conquering Dalmatia and punishing the murderers of Nepos, reigned over the Romans as patricius, and over his own German followers under the title of king. His followers, like those of most other German conquerors, were rewarded, by receiving one-third of all the lands of the vanquished. But as his own kingdom was no more safe against foreign invasion than the empire had been before, he endeavoured to secure himself against the

Visigoths, by allowing them to occupy the district of Gaul called *Narbonensis Secunda*, and to extend their dominion as far as the Rhone, while he left the island of Sicily to the Vandals, whose kingdom was then firmly established on the north coast of Africa, from the Syrtes to the Atlantic. He had, however, still to contend against several tribes in the north-east of his dominions, and in the end found it advisable to remove the Roman settlers in the Danubian provinces to Italy, so that henceforth those provinces, though still belonging to Odoacer's empire, were in the hands of German tribes, with the exception, perhaps, of a few feeble remnants of their ancient Celtic population, and a few Italian colonists, who declined the invitation of Odoacer.

4. The court of Constantinople still regarded Italy and the West as an integral part of the empire, and Zeno, the Emperor of the East, still claiming to be the sovereign of the whole empire, now employed the same method which had previously been resorted to on several occasions, of securing the assistance of one barbarian chief against another. Theodoric, surnamed the Great, who was then king of the Ostrogoths, ruled over most of the nations which had once been united under the sceptre of Attila. Ever since their settlement in Pannonia, the Ostrogoths had received under the name of presents a tribute from the Greek emperors ; and on one occasion when its payment was neglected, their king Theodemir, by plundering Illyricum, compelled the Byzantine court to make up the arrears, but had to send his own son Theodoric, then in his eighth year, to Constantinople as a hostage that he would commit no act of hostility against the empire. The young Gothic prince remained in this condition for ten years, during which the Emperor Zeno became much attached to him, and he had ample opportunities of making himself acquainted with the civilisation and the vices of the Greeks ; but the luxurious life by which he was surrounded did not extinguish the warlike and daring character

which he had inherited from his ancestors. In 474, the Emperor Zeno ceded to the Ostrogoths the southern parts of Pannonia and Dacia, and intrusted to them the defence of the Lower Danube. The year after this, Theodoric succeeded his father as king of the Ostrogoths. For a time he acted as the faithful ally of Zeno, but as the latter neglected to provide him with the supplies and reinforcements he had promised, the young Gothic king ravaged the territory of Constantinople, and carried his devastations even into Macedonia and Thessaly, until, in 483, Zeno propitiated him by adopting him as his son, and conferring upon him the titles of patricius and consul. His restless spirit, however, did not permit him to remain inactive; hence a few years later, he again marched upon Constantinople, and Zeno saved himself by requesting him to direct his arms against the usurper Odoacer in Italy, which country appears to have been regularly ceded to Theodoric, in case his arms should be successful. This suggestion was gladly and eagerly taken up, and, in 488, Theodoric set out on his expedition to Italy. He was accompanied by Goths from all parts, who followed him with all their wives, children, and moveable property, so that in reality his march was a migration of the whole Gothic nation, which was drawn westward by the glowing descriptions they had heard of the beauty and fertility of Italy. In the summer of 489, after struggling with great difficulties in the countries occupied by Bulgarians and Sarmatians, the Goths, amounting to about 200,000 souls, arrived on the south of the Alps.

Odoacer had assembled a powerful army in the neighbourhood of Aquileia, but was defeated by the invaders with great loss. He then rallied his remaining forces in the neighbourhood of Verona, and fought a second battle in the autumn of the same year. But its issue was still more disastrous than that of the first, and Odoacer was obliged to seek protection within the strong fortifications of Ravenna, where he was besieged during three years. He then surrendered, on condition

that he and Theodoric should rule over Italy conjointly. A few days after this agreement, however, in 493, Odoacer being charged with harbouring treacherous designs, was murdered at a banquet to which he had been invited by Theodoric.

Theodoric, who gradually subdued all Italy, became the undisputed master of the country, which he governed for a period of thirty-three years until his death in 526. This new conquest of Italy by the Ostrogoths did not produce any material changes, except that the German tribes which had supported Odoacer, were ejected from their landed possessions and succeeded by the conquerors. The court of Constantinople, whatever may have been its intentions and expectations, gained nothing, for Theodoric, like his predecessor, ruled as patricius over the Romans and as king over his own people. The German tribes settled in the Danubian provinces were allowed to remain unmolested under his sway ; they, like other parts of his empire, were governed by a duke (*Dux*) ; the inhabitants of the country once occupied by the Boii, were called Bojuvari, that is, Bavari or Bavarians, and the *Duces Bojuvarorum* are the most ancient rulers of modern Bavaria. The dominions of Theodoric, acquired by force of arms, were increased by the peaceful acquisition of Raetia, Illyricum, and the island of Sicily, the last of which he obtained from the Vandal king Thrasimund. Beyond this Theodoric did not attempt to extend his empire, for he knew too well that an increase of territory is not always an increase of power ; hence his wars were of a defensive rather than of an aggressive nature. Towards the Emperor of the East he observed throughout that kind of deference which was sure to secure peace from that quarter. His whole administration shows that he was a prince who loved peace, and was determined to make the best possible use of it.

During his long and beneficent reign, Italy enjoyed a period of repose from the almost incessant devastations to which it had been so long subjected. Its conquest by the Ostrogoths had

made little change in the political and social relations of the native population. Even the distribution of one-third of the land among the followers of Theodoric was not felt as much as one might imagine, for a vast amount of landed property had been abandoned by its owners before, and the possession of the remaining two thirds was secured to the natives by stringent laws ; for the Goths were kept in strict discipline, and taught to respect the life and property of the people among whom they settled. The material prosperity of Italy was ever increasing ; the value of land and of agricultural produce was ever rising ; and the cities, especially Rome, Ravenna, and Verona, the usual residence of the king, enjoyed a high degree of prosperity. The erection of numerous public buildings, churches, palaces, and arsenals, gave constant employment to the people, and what remained of ancient art was carefully fostered by the barbarian prince. Many of the remaining architectural monuments of the Roman period, which had suffered either from the wasting influence of time, or the wild ravages of war, were repaired and preserved as far as possible. The incomparable aqueducts, roads, ports, and the structures contrived by the Romans for draining the country, could not indeed all be saved from the ruinous condition into which they had fallen, for the resources of Italy at this time would not have sufficed ; but many were rescued from decay, and the commerce and health of the country greatly improved. The native Italians were forbidden the use of arms, which the Goths alone were entitled to wear, and this privilege was the only advantage they enjoyed over the conquered people, for both nations had to pay the same amount of taxes. The inhabitants of the towns retained their ancient municipal rights and privileges, and Theodoric even extended Roman institutions to his own people. All civil offices, as far as possible, were given to native Italians, while the military administration was reserved to the Goths. In his attempts to regulate the laws and the administration of justice among his Goths, he could not at once

undertake any thorough reforms, but in this respect too he endeavoured to pave the way for a complete approximation to the legal relations of the ancient Romans. Hence, in 500, he issued an edict of the same kind as the ancient prætorian edicts, in which some leading legal questions affecting the Goths themselves were decided entirely according to the principles of the Roman law. In like manner, he promoted in every possible way a peaceful understanding between the two nations, for he demanded of his people that they should adopt, as far as possible, the higher civilisation of the Romans, claiming as the only distinction for himself and his Goths the exclusive right of being the armed defenders of the country, and regarding this as a sufficient security against effeminacy and corruption. He always professed veneration for the institutions of ancient Rome, and when, in 500, he visited the eternal city, he convened the senate, and assured the august assembly that he entertained for it the highest respect, and would endeavour to govern his dominions in accordance with the laws. Though he, like his Gothic subjects, was attached to the Arian creed, he showed no aversion to the Catholic or orthodox religion, and allowed his Italian subjects full freedom to act according to their convictions. He even protected the Jews, against whom fanaticism was then very rife, and declared that he would not impose any religious dogma upon men, because no one could be forced into believing it. The admirable conduct of this wise ruler attracted the attention of most other Teutonic rulers and nations, who looked up to him as their chief, and he strengthened this feeling of attachment by marriages of the members of his own family with those of the royal houses of other Germanic nations. Thus he gave Theodichusa, one of his daughters, in marriage to Alaric II., king of the Visigoths, and Ostrogotha to Sigismund, a son of Gundobald, king of the Burgundians ; his sister Amalfreda was married to Thrasimund, king of the Vandals, and a niece, Amalaberga, to Hermanfred, king of the Thuringians.

Theodoric himself, after the death of his first wife, married a sister of the Frankish king Clovis. When his son-in-law, Alaric II., died, leaving a son Amalaric, who was only a child, Theodoric undertaking the guardianship of his grandson, ruled over both branches of the Gothic nation, the Ostrogoths and Visigoths, and thus extended his sway over Spain and the south of Gaul.

Theodoric, although himself probably unable to write, drew towards himself the most illustrious men of the age, such as Cassiodorus, who was for a long time what may be called his prime minister, Boëthius, the father-in-law of Symmachus, and Bishop Ennodius. The last years of his life are darkened by several acts of cruelty and persecution. The Emperor of Constantinople had issued several decrees against the Arian heresy, and John I., Bishop of Rome, was sent to Constantinople to induce the emperor to recall his decrees. But instead of this, he persuaded the bishop and the clergy of Italy to exert every means in their power to eradicate the Arian heresy. Notwithstanding this flagrant violation of his duty, the bishop had the boldness to return to Italy; but the king ordered him to be imprisoned, and his death, which took place soon after, made him appear to the Italians in the light of a martyr. Many of the most illustrious Romans at the same time incurred the king's suspicion of having formed a treacherous conspiracy with the clergy and the court of Constantinople, and many of them were arrested and tried in a very arbitrary manner. Symmachus and Boëthius, who were then unquestionably the most distinguished laymen in all Italy, fell victims to the anger of the king. When Symmachus was led to death, he boldly charged the king with having shed the blood of innocent Christians, and died like an ancient martyr. Boëthius was thrown into a prison at Pavia, and when he found that his doom was sealed, he consoled himself with the doctrines of the ancient pagan philosophy, and wrote down his famous meditations, under the title of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, which for

many centuries continued to be a favourite book with the most enlightened men in all parts of Europe.

Thus Theodoric in his old age deprived himself of the ablest and most influential men in the state. He died in the midst of his violent persecutions, on the 30th of August 526, tormented by grief and remorse. He was buried at Ravenna, and his ashes were deposited in a porphyry vase, which is still shown in that city. The renown of King Theodoric was great among all the Germanic nations, and in their most ancient poetical productions he is often mentioned as a hero of superhuman strength, under the name of Dietrich von Bern (Verona), while the ecclesiastical legends of Italy have consigned him, like other great persecutors of the Christians, to the fire of hell.

Theodoric left no male issue, and according to a regulation made before his death, his empire was to be divided between his two grandsons, so that the union between the Ostrogoths and Visigoths, which had subsisted for some years, was dissolved, and each nation was again governed by its own king, the river Rhone forming the boundary between them. The kingdom of the Visigoths in Spain and Gaul was made over to Amalaric, as whose guardian Theodoric had acted, and that of the Ostrogoths descended to Athalaric, a son of Theodoric's daughter Amalasontha by a prince of the royal race of the Amali. But the latter kingdom rapidly decayed, and did not long survive the death of its great founder.

5. After the death of her father, his daughter, Amalasontha, undertook the administration of the kingdom in the name of her son Athalaric; but she gave offence to her Gothic subjects by her partiality for the Romans, whose refined manners she had adopted and wished to establish at the court; her Gothic nobles, however, compelled her to have her son educated with the other boys of her own nation. This and other circumstances, and especially a correspondence she entered into with the Emperor Justinian, whose undertakings against the Vandals she supported,

rendered her extremely unpopular. When, therefore, her son died in 534, Amalasontha assumed her avaricious cousin, Theodat, as her colleague on the throne. This man, a son of Amalafreda, had amassed large landed possessions in Tuscia (Tuscany), and was well acquainted with Latin and Greek literature ; his rapacious conduct had been very reprehensible, but impunity was secured to him on his taking a solemn oath that he would make no attempt to deprive Amalasontha of her legal rights. Notwithstanding this, however, he soon after caused her to be murdered on an island in the Lago di Bolsena. Justinian, the Emperor of the East, under the pretext of avenging her death, now attempted to establish by force of arms his claims to the sovereignty of the West, which the court of Constantinople had never ceased to regard as an integral part of the empire ; and as he had just succeeded in re-establishing the imperial authority in Africa by successful enterprises against the Vandals, he commenced the Italian war with not unreasonable hopes of success. A war thus began between the eastern empire and the Ostrogoths, which lasted twenty years, from 535 to 555, and ended in the destruction of the Ostrogothic kingdom. The main reason why this war was protracted so long must be looked for in Justinian's want of resources, and his jealous fear of his general Belisarius. Justinian at once commissioned Mundus to invade Dalmatia, and seized Salona, and then sent Belisarius with a fleet and an army of 7000 warriors into Italy. This force was indeed insufficient, but the emperor calculated upon a rising of the Romans, and was negotiating a treaty of alliance with the Franks. When Belisarius arrived in Sicily in 535, he took possession of the island almost without a blow, and the year after, he landed in Italy and made himself master of Naples. One of the Gothic chiefs, a nephew of Theodat, now went over to the imperial army, and Theodat himself, who was deposed by an assembly of chiefs at Terracina, attempted to escape by flight, but was overtaken and killed. His successor, Vitiges, though a general

of great experience, was unable to change the course of events ; soon the whole of southern and central Italy was in the hands of Belisarius, who, being supported by the Roman bishop, Sylvester, entered the city of Rome with his small Byzantine army. Vitiges, in his alarm, entered into negotiations with the Franks, who had already advanced into Italy as far as the Po and showed no friendly disposition towards either of the belligerent parties ; he offered to cede to them Provence and the sovereignty of the Alemanni in Raetia, if they would assist him in his struggle against the Byzantines. But all he could gain was the permission to enlist troops in the Frankish territory : hosts of Alemannians and Burgundians accordingly soon came down upon Italy, where they repelled a detachment of the Byzantine army, and took Milan, which, under the dominion of the Ostrogoths, had become a large and populous city, but was now razed to the ground. The rich booty, however, tempted the new invaders to continue the war in Italy on their own account, and they displayed their savage hostility against the Goths no less than against the Romans. When their avarice was satiated they returned home, and the reports they brought back of the wealth of Italy so heated the imagination of the Frankish king, Theodebert, that, without any regard to his treaties with Constantinople, he invaded Italy and changed into a wilderness nearly the whole of Lombardy. The Goths were as much rejoiced as the Byzantines, when, after a few months, this army likewise returned across the Alps. Meanwhile, Belisarius had advanced as far as Ravenna, into which Vitiges had thrown himself. Belisarius by skilful management contrived to take the impregnable city, and to induce Vitiges to surrender and resign his kingly dignity. A few more or less numerous swarms of Goths still maintained themselves in northern Italy, but they were so little heeded by the Byzantines, that even then Italy was treated as an ordinary province of the eastern empire, and the subjugation of the country seemed to be complete. Some time before these

occurrences, the Goths, in order to create a diversion against the eastern empire, had even sent ambassadors to stimulate Persia in its efforts against the eastern empire. In consequence of this, Belisarius, whose presence moreover seemed no longer to be required in Italy, was recalled to Constantinople, where Vitiges adorned his triumph.

Thus ended the first campaign in Italy, the whole of which, as far as the river Po, was now in the hands of the Byzantines. But no sooner had Belisarius departed than the bands of Goths scattered over northern Italy began to organize themselves again, and reinforcements flocked to them from all parts. At Pavia they elected Ildebad, a distinguished general, their king. At first he gained some advantages over the imperial troops, but the Goths being dissatisfied with his success put him to death, and all seemed to be lost again. The Germanic warriors, being unable to agree as to a successor, the Gothic party raised Totilas, the most celebrated of all the Gothic captains, to the throne, while another party, the Rugii, elected Eraric ; but as, after a few months, it was discovered that the latter had entered into a correspondence with the Byzantine court, he was sentenced to death, and the two nations united under the sceptre of Totilas. He conducted the war against the feeble Byzantines, who were ill equipped and ill commanded, with such success, that within a period of three years, from 541 to 544, he recovered all Italy for the Ostrogoths, with the exception of a few fortresses into which the Byzantine generals were obliged to withdraw. Totilas was already before the gates of Rome when Belisarius, in 543, reappeared in Italy, but with such insufficient forces as to be unable to recover what had been lost. He was obliged, for the most part, to confine himself to defensive attitudes. The Goths, who had formerly shown no disposition to treat the Italians harshly, now displayed the most reckless cruelty, and by their conduct intimated that they regarded all Italians and Catholics as the natural allies of their

enemies. Under these circumstances, the happiness and prosperity of Italy, for which Odoacer and Theodoric had laboured, soon vanished entirely. The city of Rome, whose remaining external splendour had at least lost nothing during the Gothic dominion, was now repeatedly threatened with entire destruction. It was taken by Totilas in 546, but was recovered by Belisarius the year after. As the latter, in spite of his earnest requests, could not induce the court of Constantinople to furnish him with the means necessary for conducting the war, either because a party at court was intriguing against him, or because the Persian war too much engaged the attention of the empire, he indignantly demanded to be recalled—a demand which was complied with in 549.

After this second departure of Belisarius from Italy, Totilas recovered Rome, and soon made himself master of all Italy; the year after, having hurriedly prepared a fleet, he crossed over into Sicily, ravaged Corfu, and conquered Sardinia and Corsica. He was already occupied with plans of attacking the eastern empire itself, when the emperor, in 552, resolved to recover what was lost; he at once sent Narses, a general enjoying the greatest confidence at court, to Italy, and provided him with ample resources for conducting the war. With an army chiefly composed of barbarians, who were easily attracted by the rich Byzantine pay, Narses crossed the Alps, carefully avoiding on his march touching upon the Frankish territory. Paying no regard to a Gothic army stationed at Verona, he defeated Totilas in a great battle near Gubbio in Umbria. The Gothic king himself escaped, but was mortally wounded, and Rome was taken for the fifth time during this war. The Goths, however, still continued their exertions, hoping that assistance would come from the Franks, though previous experience might have taught them that the Frankish king was not disposed to afford them any real and efficient aid. They concentrated their forces under their newly elected king Tejas, in the neighbour-

hood of Mount Vesuvius. There they were surrounded by Narses, and as they refused to capitulate, he cut off their supplies, and thereby forced them to accept a battle, which ended in their complete destruction, 553. Their king fought and fell at the head of his army, and his troops showed that they were worthy descendants of the bravest among the Germans. The losses, however, sustained by Narses were so great, that he again offered favourable terms of capitulation to the remaining Goths, but they were accepted by only a small portion, while the rest gallantly fought their way to the north of Italy. There they joined some Alemannian and Frankish chiefs who had just come across the Alps ; but these invaders not being tempted to fight for the interest of the Goths, merely satisfied their avarice by predatory excursions in various parts of Italy. Narses thought it scarcely necessary to oppose them with an armed force, but confined himself to protecting the towns and fortresses. As the open districts of Italy had already been reduced to a state of utter desolation, the greater part of those roaming hordes perished from famine and epidemics, and Narses was enabled to annihilate without difficulty the few isolated detachments of the Goths, 555.

The destruction of the Ostrogothic people was so complete, that in a very short time the few survivors were lost among the remaining population of Italy. That country, which about fifteen years before had still been the wealthiest and most flourishing part of Europe, had now become the poorest and most desolate. Even the great cities whose strong vitality had survived so many a storm, were now in a helpless condition, which lasted for many a year. Rome itself had suffered unspeakably during the repeated sieges and seizures ; but still more terrible was the fate of Milan, which had been reduced to a heap of ruins, in which only gangs of greedy robbers took up their abode. Many of the most illustrious families of imperial Rome had died away, or were reduced to beggary. Italy now became a province of the eastern empire, governed by an exarch, who resided at Ra-

venna, and Justinian endeavoured to regulate the affairs of the country, but could do little more than introduce his code of laws. Narses was the first of the exarchs of Italy ; the larger cities, with their territories, were governed and defended by duces (dukes), who, like the governor himself, had both military and civil power. The new rulers did not by any means exercise their powers in a conciliatory spirit : the Italians soon groaned under their arbitrary proceedings, and the insufferable weight of taxation ; for the impoverished country had now not only to pay for its own costly administration and the maintenance of its armies, but to supply the exhausted imperial treasury at Constantinople with the means of carrying out its own designs ; and all the ill-feeling thus called forth was increased by the personal avarice of Narses. At last, however, 566, the emperor, Justin II., was prevailed upon to recall Narses, and appoint Flavius Longinus his successor. Two years after this the Longobardi, or Lombards, invaded Italy, and again deprived the eastern empire of the greater portion of the peninsula, over which it had exercised the sovereignty only thirteen years. These Lombards were believed at the time to have been invited by Narses in revenge for the manner in which he had been recalled from his province by the emperor.

6. Long before the downfall of the western empire, nearly the whole of Gaul was occupied by German tribes, and only the districts called Champagne and Picardy, with the towns of Beauvais, Soissons, Troyes, and Rheims, were still governed by a Roman of the name of Syagrius, as a part of the empire, though the surrounding barbarians styled him King of the Romans. The Visigoths, besides Spain, possessed the south-west of Gaul, where they gradually extended their dominion as far as the Rhone and Loire. The country between Langres and the Durance, and from the Loire to the Alps, was occupied by the Burgundians, while Frankish chiefs reigned at Cologne, Cambrai, and Terouanne. The maritime district called Armorica, comprising modern

Brittany and the greater part of Normandy, was still independent, forming the ancient confederation of Armorican cities. Alans and Saxons also existed in some parts of the country. But the most important of all the German tribes north of the Loire were the Franks, who ultimately made themselves masters of the whole of Gaul, and gave it the name which it still bears.

The Franks do not appear to have been a distinct tribe, but, like the Saxons and Alemannians, to have consisted of a confederacy of several, one of which we know to have been the ancient Sigambri. The whole body of the Franks, however, was divided into two great branches, those dwelling on both sides of the lower Rhine being from this circumstance called Ripuarii, that is, inhabitants of the river banks, while those on the west of the Ripuarii, at and about Tournai, bore the name of the Salian Franks. The latter are said to have been governed at the beginning of the fifth century by a king Pharamund ; but Gregory of Tours, our best authority on the early history of the Franks, does not mention him, and only states, that about 428, Clodion, or Chlogion, was raised to the throne, and extended the dominion of the Franks as far as the Sumina or Somme, but that he was afterwards driven back by the Roman general Aëtius. Clodion was succeeded in 448 by Meroveus, from whom the dynasty of the Frankish princes derive the name of the Merovingians, though Meroveus himself was unquestionably only one of several chiefs ruling over a small principality. He is generally believed to have taken part in the great battle of Chalons against the Huns, under Attila, though some state that he and his Franks supported Attila against Aëtius. Meroveus, whose reign is stated to have lasted ten years, was the father of Childeric I., and the grandfather of Clovis, the real founder of the Frankish monarchy. Childeric, who succeeded his father, was for some time expelled from his principality, while his subjects placed themselves under the rule of Aegidius, the father and predecessor of Syagrius. After

some time the Franks recalled their national chief, who now associated himself with the Saxon pirates who had at that time landed at the mouth of the Loire, and were roaming over the country on both sides of the river. Childeric died in 481, and was succeeded by his son Chlodovaeus, or Clovis, as he is more commonly called.

7. At the time of his accession, Clovis was only fifteen years old. His dominion did not extend much beyond the country about Tournai, and his Frankish warriors hardly amounted to more than 5000 men ; but his uncommon boldness and the divided state of Gaul facilitated its conquest, which fifty years before would have been impossible. The Franks had for some time lived on terms of amity with the neighbouring Romans, as is manifest from their having placed themselves under the dominion of Aegidius ; but when the western empire had fallen under the stroke of Odoacer, Clovis determined to get rid also of their presence in Gaul. In 463, Syagrius had succeeded his father Aegidius, and still maintained the authority of Rome in the small district between the Somme and Loire, where, however, his position became more and more imperilled. In 486, Clovis commenced hostilities against him, and a battle was fought in the neighbourhood of Soissons, in which Syagrius was completely defeated. He sought protection at the court of Alaric II., King of the Visigoths, but was delivered up into the hands of his enemy, who ordered him to be put to death. The last remnant of the Roman empire was thus destroyed, and all Gaul, with the exception of the Armorican cities, was now in the hands of German invaders. Many Franks had already for some time been settled in the country about Rheims and as far as Paris ; all these now readily acknowledged the supremacy of Clovis, and the towns surrendered one after another. Before and during these struggles, many districts had lost their owners, while others were forcibly taken from the Romans ; so that the Frankish king was enabled to grant ex-

tensive allotments of land to his nobles and followers, and select large domains for himself, without undertaking a regular division of the country between the natives and his own warriors. The middle and lower Loire now formed the boundary between the kingdoms of Clovis and the Visigoths ; while the upper Moselle separated the dominions of Clovis from the Alemanni, and the upper Seine from the country occupied by the Burgundians.

Some years after this, in 493, Clovis married Clotilda, a Catholic princess, daughter of the Burgundian prince Chilperic. Her father had been murdered by his brother Gundobald, who wished to secure the sovereignty to himself. She felt it her duty to take vengeance on the murderer, and this duty, transferred by her marriage to Clovis and his sons by her, led to a succession of wars between the Franks and Burgundians, which ended in the total extirpation of the royal family of the latter about 535. After that time the Burgundians were obliged to pay tribute, and serve in the army of the Franks, but retained their own laws and institutions. The country of the Burgundians thereafter formed part of the Frankish kingdom, and was governed by princes of the Merovingian line.

Until the marriage of Clovis all the Franks were pagans, although their intercourse with the Christians in Romanized Gaul seems to have greatly softened the former animosity between pagans and Christians, and to have facilitated the conversion of the former. It is commonly said, however, that it was mainly owing to Clotilda's influence that the fierce Frank became favourably disposed towards Christianity. His conversion took place a few years after his marriage, but did not produce any change in his conduct, and was in all probability the result of political calculation rather than of an inward conviction, the king being desirous to remove the barriers which still separated him and his pagan Franks from the Romanized Gauls, who were Catholics.

Clovis appears from the first to have harboured extensive schemes of conquest, and an opportunity soon offered itself for carrying out his designs. The Ripuarian Franks were then governed by Sigibert, who resided at Cologne, and was unable to defend himself against the encroachments of the Alemannians. This people had latterly spread over the country between the Rhine and Moselle, and now began to establish itself in the country on the north of the latter river. Sigibert thus threatened applied to Clovis for assistance. The latter readily listened to the summons, and advanced with a numerous army of Franks and Romanized Gauls. In the neighbourhood of Zülpih (Tolbiacum), between Bonn and Aix-la-Chapelle, a great battle was fought in 496 between the Franks and Alemannians. For a long time the contest remained undecided, and victory at last seemed to be on the side of the Alemannians. At this moment Clovis is said to have made a vow to become a worshipper of the god of Clotilda, if victory were vouchsafed to him. When this became known among the Christians serving under him, their enthusiasm rose to the highest pitch, and the Alemannians were completely defeated. Clovis, quickly following up his victory, subdued the country between the Moselle and the Rhine, pursued the enemy across the latter river, and made himself master of the territory between the Lahn and Neckar; nay, even the southern bank of the Neckar fell into his hands as far as the Ossbach, which, together with the upper Rhine, henceforth formed the boundary between the Franks and Alemannians. The chiefs of the Alemannians south of the Ossbach, fearing the irresistible progress of the victorious Frank, applied for protection to Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, who readily granting their request, declared the Alemannians to be a part of his own empire; he further ceded to those who had been expelled by Clovis, a district in Raetia, and appointed one of their chiefs governor, with the title of duke. Another duchy was thus formed on

the west of that of Bavaria. All the estates which had belonged to the chiefs of the Alemannians in the newly conquered countries, fell into the hands of Clovis, as did also the property of all those who had taken to flight or fallen in battle. These acquisitions enabled him to increase the number of domains which he distributed among his nobles and faithful adherents. But the greater part of the countries was left to their former inhabitants, who were now bound to pay tribute and serve in the Frankish armies.

The Ripuarian Franks, for whose interest the war against the Alemannians had been undertaken, derived from it no other advantage than the security of their southern frontiers; while Clovis, in consequence of his brilliant success, was looked up to by all the Franks with pride and admiration as their glorious champion. On Christmas-day 496, which was at the same time the beginning of the year 497, Clovis, fulfilling his vow, was baptized with 3000 of his nobles at Rheims, by Bishop Remigius, and became a member of the Catholic Church. Large numbers of Franks, without any kind of compulsion, followed his example, but many still remained pagans for a time. This step was one of infinite importance in the history of Gaul; it produced the deepest impression in all Catholic Christendom. Pope Anastasius II. and several eminent dignitaries of the Church, looking upon him as the true Christian king of the west, congratulated him on the step he had taken. All the Romanized Gauls belonged to the Catholic Church, and while they detested the Visigoths and Burgundians as Arian heretics, they looked upon Clovis as their common and natural protector. He craftily availed himself of this popularity with the clergy and his Romanized subjects of Gaul, for the purpose of carrying out his schemes of conquest.

About the year 500, Clovis, at the instigation of his wife and the Catholic bishops of Gaul, undertook the long meditated war against Gundobald, king of the Burgundians. A battle

was fought in the neighbourhood of Dijon, in which Godegisel, the only surviving brother of the Burgundian king, went over to the Franks, and received the country between Vienne and Geneva as a tributary vassal of the Frankish empire. Gundobald retreated upon Avignon, where he was compelled to recognise Clovis as his sovereign and pay tribute. But scarcely had the Frankish army withdrawn, when Gundobald attacked and slew his brother Godegisel, and declared himself sole king of the Burgundians, repudiating at the same time the promises he had made to Clovis. As he obtained from Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, a promise to support him, Clovis did not venture to molest him, and was satisfied with some concessions which were made to him by Gundobald. Thus the external existence of the Burgundian kingdom was saved, though internally it was in a state of decay. The country had gradually recovered from the calamities inflicted on it during the invasion of the Huns, and, excepting the religious differences, the Burgundians and their Romanized subjects were becoming more and more amalgamated. The Burgundians had to a great extent even given up their own native language, and adopted the Latin dialect spoken in the country ; in their domestic arrangements and in their manners and customs, they had so far assimilated themselves to the native population, that only their names and their robust physical features distinguished them as Germans. The only barrier separating the two nationalities was the difference in creed ; but although the great body of the Burgundians were Arians, many of them, and even members of the royal family, were stoutly attached to Catholicism. Gundobald always exerted himself to maintain a peaceful relation between the two sects, and his own son, Sigismund, being brought up as a Catholic, promised a speedy union of the two nations. His Romanized subjects had greatly benefited by mingling with their conquerors, and were even allowed to bear arms in their own defence as well as in the ser-

vice of their ruler, and this was the first thing required if they were ever to regain their independence. As the amalgamation between the two nations had in this kingdom been carried further than anywhere else, it would have been wise if Gundobald had endeavoured to render their union complete in every respect. But this he neglected in drawing up two distinct codes of law, one for his Roman subjects under the title of *Papiniani Liber Responsorum*, and the other for the Burgundians under the title of *Lex Burgundionum*. The kingdom thus internally weak, was propped up for a time by Theodoric, but the momentary support was no guarantee for the future. Gundobald reigned until 516.

While Clovis was thus prevented by the threatening attitude of Theodoric from chastising the Burgundians, the Catholic clergy and subjects of the Visigoths in the south of Gaul, who seem to have been harshly treated by their Arian rulers, invited him to come and take possession of the Gallic portion of the Visigothic kingdom. Rejoicing at the opportunity of coming forward as the champion of the orthodox church, he at once set out against the detested Arians. The Visigoths were then governed by Alaric II., who had succeeded Euric in 484, and had married, as has already been stated,¹ a daughter of Theodoric. Clovis, dreading the interference of the powerful king of the Ostrogoths, tried to carry out his design as rapidly and secretly as possible ; but his preparations did not escape the watchfulness of Theodoric, and attempts were made to prevent a collision between the Franks and Visigoths. The Burgundian Gundobald was to mediate between them, but Clovis silenced this inconvenient adviser by liberal concessions and promises, and, in 507, a decisive battle was fought between the Visigoths and Franks near Cloué,² not far from Poitiers, on

¹ See p. 11.

² Some call the place of this battle Vouillé or Vouglé, which, however, does not appear to be the name of a place at all.

the banks of the Clain, in which the Visigoths lost all their possessions as far as the Garonne. Alaric himself perished during his flight after the battle. The grandees of his kingdom were divided into two factions in regard to the succession, some supporting Amalaric, Alaric's son by a daughter of Theodoric, while another party endeavoured to raise Gesalic, a natural son of the late king, to the throne. But matters were so arranged that the former succeeded in Spain, and the latter received that portion of Gaul which still belonged to the Visigoths, called Septimania, that is, the coast district between the Pyrenees and the mouth of the Rhone. As Theodoric undertook the regency of the Visigothic kingdom for his grandson, a stop was put to Clovis' schemes of conquest in that direction.

During his more important undertakings, Clovis also subdued Armorica. Its population had been increased by the Celtic inhabitants of Britain, who had been forced to quit their country by the progress made by the Saxons. In the western parts of Armorica, these fugitive Celts were so numerous that the district received the name of Britannia Minor, whence the modern Brittany. But notwithstanding this increase of population, Armorica was unable to maintain its independence, and, after a few campaigns, the people were obliged, in 502, to recognise the supremacy of the Frankish sovereign.

The whole of Gaul, with the exception of the Burgundian kingdom and the extreme southern and western coast districts, was now subject to Clovis, and he applied to the court of Constantinople for the title of patricius, under which Theodoric ruled in Italy. The request was granted by the Emperor Anastasius, who, in 508, sent him the insignia of both the consulship and the patriciate, with which he was invested in the church of St. Martin at Tours. Henceforth Clovis appeared among the Romanized Gauls as the legitimate representative of the ancient empire. He now made Paris, which for more than

a century had been regarded as one of the most important cities of Gaul, the permanent capital of his kingdom.

The Ripuarian and other Frankish tribes still had their own independent kings, but Clovis, fearing lest at some time or another his own descendants should suffer, either through the pretensions of those chiefs or through the fickleness of his own subjects, resolved to get rid of the dreaded rivals at all hazards. He accordingly caused the aged Sigibert, king of the Ripuarian Franks, to be murdered by his own son, and afterwards pretending to avenge the death of his kinsman, ordered Sigibert's son to be put to death. As no other prince came forward to claim the sovereignty, Clovis, who had already won the admiration of all the Franks, easily prevailed upon the Ripuarians to recognise him as their king. The other Frankish chiefs residing at Tournai, Cambrai, and Mans, were soon after despatched in a similar manner. When the crafty barbarian had thus accomplished his purpose, he assembled his friends, and hypocritically expressed himself as follows about those who had fallen his victims : " Oh, unhappy man that I am ! I find myself like a traveller in the midst of strangers, and am without relations who might succour and comfort me in the hour of adversity !" His object in thus speaking was, no doubt, to see whether any one would come forward claiming to be of the royal race. Soon after the perpetration of these atrocities he died, in 511, at the early age of forty-five, leaving behind him four sons.

It has already been observed,¹ that the conquest of Gaul by the Franks, in consequence of the large tracts of land that had lost their owners, was less severely felt by the natives than similar conquests in other parts of the empire, nor was their social and political condition much disturbed, when once the terrors of war had passed away. The old provincials retained their ancient laws and institutions, though Frankish officers,

¹ See p. 21.

under the Roman title of counts (*comites*), were invested with the supreme civil and military power in those districts over which they were appointed. The Franks continued to live according to their ancient national laws, which were collected in the reign of Clovis, in a code called the Salic law (*Lex Salica*). This code, which must not be regarded as a systematic and comprehensive body of law, had probably become necessary in consequence of the new social and political relations in which the Franks found themselves after the conquest of Gaul. The royal prerogative was not formally enlarged by the great extension of his dominions, for the king remained on the whole what he had been before, chief commander in war, and supreme judge in times of peace ; but his power and influence naturally increased as his dominion was extended. The personal character of Clovis and the success in his military undertakings, also greatly contributed to the same end : in all his actions he displayed those qualities which produced the deepest impression upon his Frankish subjects, personal valour, military skill, profound cunning, and wise caution, as well as generous liberality when occasion required, so that in truth he was the first and ablest among his countrymen. His Romanized Gauls received at his hands what they most ardently desired, security of life and property, and protection against the brutality of the conquerors. Gaul was in a fair way of becoming a well-organized and powerful kingdom.

8. About the beginning of the fifth century, Spain had been overrun by a number of German tribes, such as the Vandals, Alans, Suevi, and Visigoths. The Vandals and Alans had crossed over into Africa in 429, and the countries they had occupied were taken possession of by the Suevi, who had previously been established in the north-western province of Gallicia. After the departure of the Vandals the Suevian kingdom embraced the whole of Andalusia, but was unable to become internally consolidated ; for as the Suevi were

still pagans, they were most energetically opposed by the Roman provincials of Spain, who, however, seem to have been ultimately subdued. But the Roman emperors, down to the overthrow of the empire, continued their hostility towards the Suevi, whose kingdom was often torn to pieces by internal dissensions. Their government was an elective monarchy, and as it occasionally happened that several kings were elected at once, the kingdom was in danger of being broken up into several principalities. Their first Christian (Catholic) king, Rechiar, ascended the throne in 448, and was constantly at war with the Roman provincials in Tarraconensis. This brought him into hostile collision with the Visigothic king, Theodoric II., who defeated him in a great battle near Paramo, on the river Obrago, 456. Rechiar was taken prisoner and put to death, and his kingdom seemed on the verge of dissolution ; but the greater part of the nation still maintained itself in Gallicia, and continued to be governed by elective kings. In order to secure the goodwill of the Visigoths, they embraced the Arian creed, but as this step brought upon them the implacable enmity of the native population, they at last returned to the orthodox faith about 560. The sectarian hatred, however, between the Catholics and Arians, which then distracted the peninsula of Spain, and disputes about the succession, soon led to the complete subjugation of the Suevi, whose last king, Andeca, was defeated by the Visigoth Leovigild in 585, and made prisoner. Not long after, a pretender of the name of Maluricus arose in Gallicia, which circumstance led to the final incorporation of the Suevian kingdom with that of the Visigoths, which now embraced the whole of Spain.

9. Of all the German tribes which established themselves in the provinces of the empire, the Visigoths were the first that adopted Christianity ; they were most docile and susceptible of the higher civilisation of the countries in which they settled. During their residence in the south-east

of Europe, they had come in contact with the Greeks, and formed an alphabet for themselves based upon that of the Greeks ; in valour they were inferior to none of the Germanic nations ; thrice they had taken and humbled Rome, and the emperors had been obliged in self-defence to sanction their establishing an independent kingdom on both sides of the Pyrenees with Tolosa (Toulouse) for its capital. Wallia, the real founder of the Visigothic kingdom, ascended the throne in 415, and his successors, sometimes acting as the allies of the Roman emperors, assisted them in their wars against other German invaders in Gaul and Spain. The defeat of the Huns in 451, was mainly owing to the Visigoths under their king, Theodoric I., Wallia's son and successor. The renown gained by Theodoric, though he fell in the battle against Attila, rendered it comparatively easy for his successors to extend their kingdom in all directions, and establish a powerful empire. Theodoric II. (453-466), having obtained from the Emperor Avitus permission to extend his conquests in Spain, subdued the Suevi, as we have seen, and confined them to the extreme corner of Gallicia. His brother Euric (466-483) gave to the Visigothic kingdom the greatest extent it ever attained, for he not only made himself master of all Spain, with the exception of the corner occupied by the Suevi, but carried his conquests in Gaul as far as the Rhone and Loire, including Arles and Marseilles. The reign of Euric is especially remarkable, because under him was commenced the compilation of a regular code of laws, which was continued by his successors, and comprised the ancient legal customs and institutions of the Gothic nation. His son, Alaric II., caused a similar collection to be made from Roman authorities, for the use of the Romanized provincials, under the title of *Lex Romana*, and afterwards *Breviarium Alaricianum*. About 184 years later, that is, in 690, King Egiza promulgated a code of laws for all his subjects indiscriminately, the Goths and Hispano-Romans having by that

time become amalgamated and united by the same language and religion. This *Lex Visigothorum*, as it was called, consisted partly of Roman laws, and partly of Gothic statutes, and is an interesting document, revealing to us many curious details regarding the state of civilisation of the Goths at that time.

During the reign of Alaric II. (483-507), the greater part of the Visigothic possessions in France was lost, and incorporated with the empire of Clovis. Alaric himself was killed while endeavouring to escape, and one part of the nation acknowledged Amalaric, his young son, by a daughter of Theodoric the Great, as his lawful successor, while another declared in favour of his son Gesalic.¹ Theodoric undertaking the guardianship of his grandson, not only governed the Visigothic kingdom in his name, but sent a considerable force under Ibbas into the country to protect his rights. In 510, Gesalic was compelled to take to flight, and was made prisoner the year after, while engaged in fresh preparations against his rival. On the death of Theodoric the Great, the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths and Visigoths were again separated, and Theudes, who reigned in the name of Amalaric, secured the independence of the Visigoths by ceding to the Ostrogoths the districts of Arles and Marseilles. When Amalaric himself assumed the reins of government, he attempted to force his wife Clotilda to embrace Arianism, but her brother Childebert, king of Neustria, made war upon Amalaric, who, being defeated by his enemy at Narbonne, was soon after slain by his own people, in 531. Theudes now seated himself upon the throne of the Visigoths; but although he granted freedom of conscience to all his subjects, Catholics as well as Arians, he felt unsafe in his own dominions. He still kept possession of Septimania, but thought it advisable to transfer his residence from Narbonne to Barcelona, in Spain; afterwards, however, about 560, Toledo became the permanent resi-

¹ See p. 21.

dence of the Visigothic kings. Theudes was murdered by a man of his own suite, who pretended to be mad, in 548.

From this time forward the kingdom of the Visigoths was an elective monarchy ; the power of the great nobles increased, and the kings rarely died a natural death. Theudisclus, the successor of Theudes, was despatched after a reign of only one year, and under his successor Agilo, the Byzantines, invited by the rebellious Athanagild, made some important conquests on the south coast of Spain. Under Leovigild (569-586), the third king after Agilo, some reparation was made for this loss by the subjugation of the Suevi. Leovigild was a stern Arian, and as his son had become a Catholic, and had formed a conspiracy with the Greeks and natives, Leovigild ordered him to be put to death. He also succeeded in dislodging the Greeks from several of the places they had conquered, and restored order and tranquillity in his kingdom, for he as well as his successors had frequently to contend against the Hispano-Romans, especially in the towns which still preserved their ancient municipal rights and privileges. He further subdued the Basques, and established the town of Vittoria in their territory, but many of the conquered Basques fled into southern Aquitania, which received from them the name of Basconia (Gascoigne). Leovigild is said to have been the first king who ordered the booty taken in war to be given up to the royal treasury ; it must be owned that, by a strict monarchical government, he established law and order in his dominions.

His son and successor, the energetic Reccared (586-601), renounced Arianism, to the great satisfaction of the Hispano-Romans, and his Visigoths followed his example. From this time the royal authority was raised by the influence of the priests, who anointed the king, and declared his government to be a divine institution ; the power of the priesthood, on the other hand, was handsomely rewarded for its services, and they received in return as much as they gave. The union

between the Goths and Spaniards now proceeded in an amicable manner ; both nations received one common law, and marriages between them were no longer looked upon with ill feeling, as had been the case before. The Goths thus became Romanized.

During the seventh century Spain was governed by several excellent Gothic kings, such as Sisibud, Sisenand, and Reccesuinth, the last of whom occupied the throne from 649 to 672. In the year 624, the last Byzantines being driven out of Spain, the kingdom attained its natural boundaries, and the rulers, more anxious to consolidate their dominion than to make conquests abroad, made no attempts to extend their kingdom, except by adding to it a portion of Mauritania. But the misfortune was that the kingdom was an elective monarchy. The nobles and the clergy were involved in frequent disputes, for both had become too powerful ; and while the nation was prosperous, and making rapid strides in civilisation, it became at the same time demoralized. Under these circumstances, one great blow from without sufficed to upset the kingdom, which had hitherto appeared the most securely established in Europe. Reccesuinth, on his accession, endeavoured to win the goodwill of the nobles by formally declaring the kingdom an elective monarchy. After his death, Wampa was unanimously elected at Toledo ; but soon after party feuds arose on both sides of the Pyrenees. It was in his reign, in the year 675, that the Arabs made their first attempt upon Spain from Africa. In 680, the clergy being dissatisfied with his vigorous rule, treacherously induced him to take the monastic vow ; he withdrew into a monastery, where he spent the remainder of his life. Ervig, who had planned this scheme against Wampa, and succeeded him on the throne, was compelled to give way to the insolent demands of his clergy and courtiers. Notwithstanding all this he was succeeded in 687 by Egiza, a son of Wampa, having been unable to secure the crown to his own son. Some time after his elevation, Egiza assumed Witiza, a son of his

predecessor, as his colleague, who reigned from 698 to 710. Egiza displayed great zeal in completing the code of laws for all his subjects, and in exterminating the Jews from his dominions, to please the clergy. But he was, nevertheless, unable to attach the clerical party to himself, and they even went so far as to form a conspiracy against his life. Witiza, who had at first ruled only over the northern part of Spain, and, after his father's death, in 701, succeeded to the government of the whole country, is severely censured by contemporary writers for having forbidden his clergy to keep up any connexion with the see of Rome, and for attempting to divide the primacy between the Archbishops of Toledo and Seville. It is, however, uncertain whether he suffered death in consequence of these innovations, or whether, as some say, merely his eyes were put out. He seems, during his reign, to have endeavoured again to make the monarchy hereditary, and when, for this reason, the nobles excluded his sons from the succession, they, in conjunction with their uncle, Oppas, Archbishop of Seville, rose in arms against Roderic, the newly elected king, and even invited the Arabs from Africa to assist them against their hated rival. Musa, the governor of Africa, accordingly, sent his general Tarik with an armed force into Spain. He landed near the cape, which still bears his name (Gebr al Tarik = Gibraltar), and was met by Roderic and his army near Xeres de la Frontera. As the Gothic king was deserted in the midst of the fight by the sons of Witiza and their party, he was defeated and slain. The Arabs now extended their conquests over the southern parts of Spain and the high table land of the interior ; their rule was on the whole mild, for whoever consented to adopt the religion of the conquerors was at once admitted among the ruling people, while those preferring to remain Christians, and the Jews, who had been cruelly persecuted by the Goths, were allowed the free exercise of their religion, provided they paid the tribute demanded of them. The remaining Visigoths, especially

their warlike nobility and the inhabitants of the towns, withdrew to the northern, more mountainous parts of the country, where they laid the foundations of new Christian kingdoms.

The constitution of the Visigothic kingdom, on the whole, resembled those of other Germanic states, formed out of the wrecks of the western empire. The kings, even after they had become elective, were generally chosen from among the relatives of the last occupant of the throne ; but their powers during the later period of the kingdom were more limited than at first. The court imitated the institutions of the Roman empire, and the higher military, civil, and court officials formed a kind of nobility, which, during the latter period of the monarchy, was engaged in perpetual feuds with the clergy. The towns or municipalities, with their decurions and separate jurisdiction, maintained their ancient rights and liberties, but the Roman provincials here, as elsewhere, had to cede to the Germanic conquerors one-third of their arable land. The difference in creed had, from the first, prevented a thorough amalgamation of the conquerors and the conquered, but the establishment of one common law for all, and the fact that Reccesuinth abolished the old law forbidding marriages between the two nations, contributed not a little to unite the whole population of the peninsula.

10. There was no part of the western empire which, about the time of its downfall, was not occupied by conquering tribes of the Teutonic stock. Even Britain, though protected on all sides by the sea, was invaded by them about the middle of the fifth century. After the island had been governed as a Roman province for a period of about 400 years, the last Roman garrisons were withdrawn in 426, and the native Celtic population was left to protect itself as best it could, on the one hand against the inroads of the rude and uncivilized Celts of the north, generally known by the names of Picts and Scots, and on the other against the invasion of German tribes which infested the eastern coasts by sea. In these circumstances, some of the British nobles, find-

ing that the divisions which separated the nation into a number of independent and sometimes hostile tribes, would inevitably lead to ruin, resolved to place themselves at the head of the nation, and do for it what the Roman governors had done before. The native Celtic tribes had, to a great extent, preserved their British nationality ; they had mostly kept aloof from the Romans residing in the towns, and lived on their estates in the country, surrounded by their dependants. Hence the civilisation of the Romans had exercised only an external influence upon the population of the island ; the Celtic dialects had remained almost entirely unaffected by the language of the rulers, and the little Latin which the natives knew was employed only in their intercourse with the Romans, and the Romanized provincials of other countries. They had, indeed, been obliged outwardly to conform to the rules of the provincial administration, but in their intercourse with one another, they still were as genuine Britons as ever.

Christianity, however, which was introduced among them at an early period, apparently by missionaries from Asia, exercised a great influence upon the national character. The pagan worship and hierarchical system of the Druids had been systematically persecuted and suppressed by the Romans, and when the doctrines of Christianity were presented to the Britons, they appear to have been adopted without any great resistance. The monastic institutions found more favour here than in any other part of the western world, but the British Christians took comparatively little part in the great dogmatic disputes which convulsed the empire ; on the whole, however, the British church remained faithful to the Catholic dogma, and the heresies of the fourth and fifth centuries, with the exception of that of Pelagius, which may, perhaps, have originated in Britain, did not much affect its church, which maintained more of its primitive simplicity and freedom than those of other countries. A subordination, under the supremacy of the Roman See, such as existed in Gaul, was unknown in Britain. The native monks and

priests were distinguished for their learning and piety, as well as for strictness of discipline in their mode of life, nor did they become as much estranged from the ancient national traditions and institutions as in other countries : in short, their church was truly national, and their national poetry, though rooted in the Druidical religion, was, with slight changes, fostered and cherished by the learned among the Christian priesthood.

Even the Roman elements in the towns, which had arisen out of military stations or colonies, were gradually absorbed, after the departure of the legions, by the native population, although at first the towns continued to use the Latin language and retained their municipal institutions. But, notwithstanding this inflexible and energetic nationality of the Britons, they had, during the Roman occupation, lost to some extent their valorous and warlike character, and were accordingly unable to defend themselves against the attacks from the north and east, which not even the Romans had always been able to repel. After the departure of the Roman legions, the northern part of Britain was helplessly exposed to the ravages of the Picts and Scots, while the southern and eastern coasts were now more than ever infested by German pirates, who, proceeding from the mouths of the Rhine, Weser, and Elbe, had periodically appeared on the coasts of Britain ever since the third century. After the close of the fourth century, these pirates were joined by other adventurers from the opposite coasts of Belgium and Gaul, which were then called the Saxon coast (*littus Saxonicum*), a proof that the greater part of its inhabitants then consisted of Saxons. They now invaded the island no longer for the mere purpose of booty and plunder, but many established themselves permanently in the land, and built strongholds in which they collected their booty, and from which they made predatory inroads into the interior. In this manner a warlike German population was gradually formed along the eastern coast, consisting of Saxons, Frisians, Angles, and Franks.

Against such swarms of rapacious and warlike barbarians, the valour of individual British chiefs was of little avail, especially as they did not act together in concord, but were often engaged in bloody feuds among themselves. They had repeatedly appealed to Rome for assistance against their enemies, but in vain; for she had to contend with barbarians nearer home for her own existence. Vortigern, one of the British chiefs who had raised himself above the rest by his bravery and prudence, advised the council of nobles to invite Saxon adventurers from the opposite coast to assist them against the Picts and Scots. These Saxons were to receive assignments of land for their services; and, accordingly, in 449, Hengist and Horsa are said to have come across with a number of followers. The Isle of Thanet, near the mouth of the Thames, was ceded to them as the place in which they might establish themselves. The success which these adventurers met with soon attracted other swarms of Saxons, Angles, and Frisians, who demanded to be employed and rewarded like their predecessors; and as Vortigern was unable to comply with their request, they commenced war upon their own account against the Britons themselves, whom they gradually drove out of their own country. The war thus begun was protracted for nearly a hundred and fifty years, but the losses sustained by the German invaders were constantly repaired by new comers from the eastern coast of the German Ocean. Fortune was decidedly in their favour. In the southern and eastern parts of England, the Celtic tribes were extirpated one after another. Wherever the invaders succeeded in establishing themselves, they did not, as in Italy, Gaul, and Spain, claim only a portion of the land, but the native population was for the most part annihilated, or reduced to slavery, and all the property was seized by the conquerors. During that disastrous period many of the Britons fled to Gaul, where they gave their name to the province of Lower Brittany. The horrors of this internecine war were increased by the dif-

ference of the religion of the Britons and the German invaders ; for the latter, being still pagans, aimed as much at the extirpation of Christianity as at the annihilation of the Celtic and Roman population.

During these wars, most of the Britons sought and found refuge in Wales, Cornwall, and Cumberland, while the German intruders formed a number of independent kingdoms in the fertile plains of the east of England ; their number is commonly assumed to have been seven, whence their aggregate is designated by the name of Heptarchy ; but at times it consisted of eight or even nine kingdoms. They were established in the following order : the earliest of them was the kingdom of the Jutes, said to have been established in Kent, in 455, by Hengist, with Canterbury for its capital ; in 491, a body of Saxons, under Ella, founded the kingdom of Sussex at and about Chichester ; in 516, Cerdic founded the kingdom of Wessex (west Saxons) at Winchester ; in 526, the kingdom of Essex (east Saxons) was formed on the banks of the Thames, with London for its capital ; in 547, a body of Angles, under Idda, occupied the country between the Humber and the Forth, which was formed into a kingdom under the name of Northumbria ; in 571, Offa, the chief of another body of Angles, established himself in the projecting coast district on the north of the Thames, and formed the kingdom of East Anglia, with Norwich for its capital ; and in 574, Crida founded another Anglian kingdom of the name of Mercia, with Lincoln or Leicester for its capital. It should be observed, that the country north of the Humber was originally formed into two kingdoms, the Anglian Bernicia, and the Saxon Deiza, which were subsequently united under the name of Northumbria.

While the German invaders, commonly called by the general name Anglo-Saxons, were thus establishing themselves in the most fertile parts of Britain, the natives made many a gallant stand, defending themselves and their country with incredible

heroism ; but none of them has gained greater renown than King Arthur of Caerleon, the greatest hero in the legends and poetical traditions of the Celts. He and his associates, the Knights of the Round Table, stand forth as the national champions of British independence, and as the defenders of civilisation and Christianity. King Arthur, whose fame was heightened and embellished by poetry, is represented during the period of the Crusades, even in the romances of continental Europe, as the *beau-idéal* of a champion against the infidels, and as the pattern of chivalry. But this poetical halo by which his character is surrounded, renders it impossible to form an accurate historical estimate of what he did for his country ; and all we positively know is, that he must have lived about the beginning of the sixth century, and successfully defended the independence of the Britons in the south-west of England.

The Angles and Saxons, who thus established themselves all along the east and in the interior of Britain, transferred to their new homes the laws, customs, and institutions of their original country in the north-west of Germany, and founded thoroughly Germanic kingdoms, which, in their insular condition, preserved their national character more pure and free from foreign influence than any of the other German kingdoms founded in the provinces of the empire. The Anglo-Saxons, when the wars were at an end, and when the Britons were almost extirpated in the parts of the country occupied by the invaders, were in the most favourable situation for developing their national character ; and the Angles, from whom the country ultimately obtained the name of Anglia, or England, appear to have been more richly endowed by nature with all those qualities which form the basis of a great nation, than any other of the Germanic tribes. Not only were they bold, brave, and enterprising, but eminently practical, plastic, and docile, whence they soon attained in their new country a degree of civilisation far eclipsing that of their brethren on the Continent ; and as soon as the softening influ-

ences of Christianity could be brought to bear upon them, the most extraordinary changes were produced. The bitter national hatred subsisting between the Anglo-Saxons and the Britons, indeed prevented the latter from attempting to convert their oppressors to Christianity ; and their zeal for the propagation of the Gospel was displayed in other parts of the world, where no national animosity presented insurmountable barriers ; but the energetic and rational method with which Pope Gregory I. carried on the missionary work among the pagans, met with no great difficulties among the Anglo-Saxons, who, in fact, looked upon the Christianity presented to them by Roman missionaries almost as a different religion from that of the ancient Britons. Gregory's attention is said to have been directed to the Anglo-Saxons by the exceeding beauty of some Anglo-Saxon boys who had been made prisoners in war, and were exhibited for sale at Rome. In the year 596, the Roman abbot St. Augustine, by order of the Pope, landed, with about forty monks, in Kent, which was then governed by King Ethelbert, who seems to have possessed a kind of supremacy among the Anglo-Saxon chiefs. He had married Bertha, a Frankish princess of the house of the Merovingians, who, being herself a Catholic, had often entreated the king to embrace Christianity. Her influence inclined him to listen to the missionaries, who acted with great adroitness and succeeded in persuading the king. Ethelbert accordingly allowed himself to be baptized, and his example was followed by many of his kinsmen and subjects. At Christmas, in 597, scarcely a year after Augustine's arrival, 10,000 Saxons at once became converts to Christianity. The Roman monks facilitated their conversion by sparing their national feelings and customs as much as possible,—a mode of procedure, the necessity of which had been strongly impressed upon their minds by the instructions of the Pope. The number of Christians soon increased so much, that it was found necessary to establish an ecclesiastical centre, and a metropolitan church and abbey

were founded at Canterbury. Augustine himself, in consideration of his merits, was appointed by Gregory first abbot of Canterbury. The Anglo-Saxon church was thus from its very foundation closely connected with Rome, and unhesitatingly acknowledged the primacy of the Roman bishop. Augustine and his companions endeavoured in vain to connect the Anglo-Saxon church with that of the Britons, and establish harmony and unity between them, and the latter maintained a sort of defensive reserve against the Christianity of their oppressors ; but this quiet opposition was rather favourable to the spreading of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons than otherwise. As Canterbury was the most ancient seat of Christianity among the Saxons, it subsequently became the see of the archbishop of all England. York was made the archiepiscopal see for the north of the island ; for the different kingdoms of the Saxons and Angles adopted Christianity one after another, without any compulsion being resorted to : example did everything. The customs and outward forms of paganism remained in many instances, as is still manifest in the names of the days of the week, which are derived from those of pagan divinities ; but the new religion nevertheless made a deep and lasting impression upon the national character ; and several of the kings were so much impressed with the vanities of their position, as to withdraw from it and enter monasteries, or undertake pilgrimages to Rome, where a separate school (*schola Saxonum*) was founded for the education of young Anglo-Saxons, and supported by contributions from their countrymen at home.

The various Germanic kingdoms established in Britain maintained, on the whole, their independence of one another, though it occasionally happened that one king was ruler of several kingdoms ; and it even occurred that one king, being pre-eminent above the rest by his valour and prudence, was regarded as the head of all the kingdoms together. As the Britons of old had found it necessary to unite against their common foes, so now

events necessarily led to the same result among the Anglo-Saxons. The continual struggles against the Britons in the west, and the Picts and Scots in the north, rendered a union of the Anglo-Saxon states for purposes of defence absolutely necessary. Hence one of the kings generally exercised a kind of supremacy under the title of Bretwalda, which was usually conferred on one of the southern kings, they and their subjects being more highly civilized than those of the north ; but the kings of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, also were sometimes honoured with the same distinction. The division of Britain into a number of independent kingdoms had scarcely lasted 250 years, when all were united, in 827, under Egbert, the powerful king of Wessex, who, disdaining the honour of a mere Bretwalda, availed himself of his position, and of the fact of several of the kingdoms having already become dependent on their more powerful neighbours, for bringing the whole country under his own sway. It was in his reign that the name of Anglia was first applied to all England, exclusive of Wales, where the Britons still maintained their independence.

When the Angles and Saxons took possession of Britain, the conquered land became what was called folkland (*ager publicus*), and was distributed among the free warriors ; but a large portion was assigned to the chief as his domain (*terra regis*). As the conquest was made at different times and by different chiefs, there was no uniformity of institutions and laws, but there are nevertheless some points which were more or less common to all the states of the Heptarchy. One class of the population was everywhere reduced to a state of absolute slavery, under the name of *theow*, *esne*, or *thrall* ; it consisted of conquered Britons, and such Germans as had forfeited their liberty by some crime. The free population was divided into cearls, who constituted the great body of the people, and thanes, who formed the nobility and gentry, and whose rank was determined by the amount of their landed property. A second class

of nobles, bearing the title of *eorl* (earl), enjoyed their privileges by the right of birth ; but landed property always determined a man's status, agriculture being the occupation of by far the greater portion of the people. The Anglo-Saxon kings, who traced their origin to Wodan and were always elected from among the members of the royal family, did not possess absolute power, being limited in its exercise by the assembly of the wise, called Witenagemot, which was essentially an aristocratic body, and was convoked and presided over by the king himself. The members of the Witenagemot consisted of the earls and bishops, though thanes also might attend ; they made the laws, voted the taxes, and the king was bound to listen to their advice in making war and peace, as well as in all other government matters ; they also formed a supreme court of justice, before which appeals might be brought against the decision of inferior courts.

The whole country was divided into shires or counties, hundredths, tythes, and townships, and in this arrangement ample scope was left for every community, both large and small, to exercise that self-government which still forms so characteristic a feature of the English nation. Each separate community, town, tythe, and shire, was presided over by an officer called *gerefa*, or *reeve*, from whom our sheriffs (shire-reeves) derive their name. We cannot here enter into any detail, but may be permitted to observe, that our most cherished institutions, to which this country owes its greatness and its glory, are legacies of the wisdom of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. A code of laws was published by Ethelbert of Kent, as early as the year 600, which, although drawn up in the Latin language, was entirely based on the national institutions of the Saxons. One hundred years later, Ina of Wessex caused a more complete code to be framed, in which the Britons were placed under the protection of the State, and which evidently aimed at an amicable amalgamation of the conquerors and the conquered.

Agriculture at first made but slow progress, and extensive forests continued for a long time to be the abodes of wolves and robbers ; the breeding of cattle was the occupation next in importance, and the produce of the two appears on the whole to have been sufficient for the support of the people, famine occurring during the Anglo-Saxon period more rarely in England than on the Continent. In the towns industry and trade flourished, at least to some extent, and in the time of the venerable Bede (730), London is called an emporium of many nations, who visited it both by land and by sea.

The inhabitants of Scotland, which had only been partially, and never permanently, subdued by the Romans, continued throughout the Anglo-Saxon period their hostile inroads into the territory of their southern neighbours, but the country between the Forth and Tweed was at times subject to the kings of Northumbria. The Highlands were then, as they are now, inhabited by the Gaelic branch of the Celtic nation, bearing the name of the Scots ; the Picts or inhabitants of the Lowlands seem to have been a Germanic race, perhaps of Norman origin. Christianity was introduced into Scotland in the year 565, by the Irish priest St. Columba, hence commonly called the apostle of the Picts ; he is said to have established the religious order of the Culdees in the western islands of Scotland, who for a long time remained independent of the Church of Rome. Scotland, during that period, seems to have been governed by a number of petty chiefs, but no authentic records about them have reached our time, and a really trustworthy history of Scotland does not begin till about the eleventh century.

Ireland had not been conquered by the Romans, nor was it disturbed by the Germanic migrations ; its inhabitants were all Celtic, and Christianity is said to have been introduced among them by St. Patrick about the year 430. As the island was not exposed to the ravages of foreign invaders, it was a favourite

place of refuge for monks from various parts of the world, and Christianity made such rapid progress that Ireland acquired the name of the *insula sanctorum*. Its monasteries were seats of great learning, and sent forth many illustrious missionaries to the other British islands and the Continent. The country was governed, like Scotland, by a number of petty chiefs or kings, though occasionally one seems to have succeeded in raising himself above the rest. In the seventh century its coasts began to be attacked by the roaming and piratic Normans.

11. The kingdom of the Vandals had existed on the north coast of Africa ever since the year 429, and during the long and warlike reign of King Genseric, they had made themselves masters not only of Africa, from the frontiers of Cyrenaica to the Atlantic Ocean, but of some of the most important islands of the Mediterranean, such as Corsica, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, and for a time even of Sicily. Genseric's rule was based upon terror and rude violence towards his conquered subjects, as well as towards the neighbouring nations. In establishing the Vandal kingdom, he had distributed his warriors, about 80,000, among a number of districts ; he retained most of the institutions which had been previously founded by the Romans, and built a large fleet, by which he became the terror of both the western and eastern empire. Even before their arrival in Africa, the Vandals had been converted to Christianity, but as they were Arians, the hatred between them and the Catholic provincials was of the bitterest kind. The wealthy provincials were deprived of the best portions of their landed property, and heavy taxes and burthens were imposed upon what was left to them. Various circumstances combined to prevent the new kingdom from becoming internally strong and consolidated, the most important of which were the religious and national differences between the Vandals and their conquered subjects ; a second great obstacle was the vast numerical superiority of the Roman provincials

and of the Mauri or Moors, whose dependence was more nominal than real ; the hot climate of Africa also caused the physical and moral energies of the Vandals to decay. According to the custom of the Vandals, the eldest member of the royal family succeeded on the demise of a king ; and as this is a Slavonic rule, it has been supposed that either the Vandals or the Alans, who had accompanied them into Africa, or perhaps both, were a Slavonic race. This strange custom, also, which gave rise to numerous murders within the royal family, greatly weakened the power of the Vandal kingdom.

When Genseric died in the year 477, he was succeeded by his son Huneric (477-484), who ruled in the same spirit as his father. He murdered several members of his own family, and although he was married to Eudoxia, the widow of Valentinian III., he was as cruel a persecutor of the Catholics and Roman provincials as his predecessor ; and the same system was pursued by his successors until the time of Hilderic. Huneric was succeeded by Gundemund (484-496), a grandson of Genseric, who allowed many exiled Catholics to return to their homes, and ceded Sicily to the Ostrogothic king Theodoric, with whom his brother and successor, Thrasamund (496-523), allied himself by marrying Amalafreda. This connexion procured him the possession of the fortress of Lilybaeum in Sicily, and the services of a body of about 6000 Goths. The peace with the eastern empire, which had been concluded by Genseric and renewed by his successor, still continued in force, and the Emperor Anastasius opened the Illyrian and Greek ports to Vandal ships ; but the Moors fought successfully for their independence. Thrasamund was succeeded by Hilderic (523-530), a son of Huneric, who at last endeavoured by toleration to conciliate his Catholic subjects and maintain more friendly relations with the Byzantine court ; for although treaties of peace existed, the natural aversion between the eastern empire and the Vandals had hitherto prevented the

formation of any real friendship between the two states. But Hilderic, though animated by good intentions, in reality only weakened his own power : his Catholic subjects, remembering the harsh and cruel treatment they had experienced under his predecessors, could not look to him with full and implicit confidence, while his Vandals, whose religious fanaticism and hatred of the Roman provincials had even increased since the time of Genseric, began to suspect their own king of undue partiality towards the Catholics. Amalafreda being believed to have formed a conspiracy among the Goths, was imprisoned and put to death, and her niece, Amalasontha, allied herself with a Moorish chief. Hilderic was not even able to defend himself against the Moorish mountaineers, whose exasperation against the Vandals was as great as it had previously been against the Romans ; but being Catholics, they were now supported by the Roman provincials in every possible way against their heretical rulers. In these circumstances Hilderic applied to the Emperor Justinian for succour ; but this step called forth a general insurrection of the Vandals, which cost him his throne. Gelimer, a great grandson of Genseric, caused him and some of his nearest relatives to be imprisoned, and assumed the kingly dignity. As Justinian found that his protest against this usurpation was of no avail, he gladly seized the opportunity of commencing hostilities against the Vandals, which had long before been determined upon, and for which extensive preparations had already been made ; for the Byzantine court had never given up its claims to the sovereignty of the western empire, and had only been waiting for a fair pretext to recover what had been lost. Justinian's remonstrances being received by Gelimer with haughtiness and defiance, war was unavoidable, and in the autumn of 533, an imperial army under Belisarius, the ablest general of the time, landed near Cape Hermaeum in Africa. Instead of meeting with any resistance, Belisarius was everywhere saluted by the native

population as a deliverer, and having advanced to the neighbourhood of Carthage, a battle was fought, in which he defeated Gelimer and made himself master of the capital of the kingdom. After a second defeat near Tricamarus, Gelimer, with a small number of followers, took refuge in the wilds of Mount Atlas ; but being surrounded by the Byzantines, he was at length forced to surrender, having endured the most distressing hardships for a period of three months.

The islands likewise readily submitted to the conqueror, and Belisarius, after completing the subjugation of the whole kingdom, led Gelimer and thousands of his Vandal subjects as prisoners to Constantinople, 534, and induced the emperor to grant to the captive king a safe place of residence and estates in Galatia. The few remaining Vandals took refuge among the Moors, their former enemies, or were lost among the provincials over whom they had tyrannized. Such was the end of the Vandal kingdom in Africa, after an existence of 105 years. Africa was now treated as a conquered province of the Eastern Empire, and governed according to the established custom. The oppressive system of taxation adopted by the Byzantines was carried out with such unrelenting rigour, that the material prosperity of the country sank even more than it had done under the terrible dominion of the Vandals. The struggles against the Moors and other barbarians in the mountains continued unabated as before, and the Byzantine court did not derive from its conquest the advantages it had anticipated. But the facility with which the Vandals had been overcome, encouraged Justinian to undertake the reduction of Italy, for which, as we have seen above,* a favourable opportunity was just then presenting itself. When that object also was accomplished, the court of Constantinople seemed in a fair way of recovering the sovereignty of the western empire ; but greater difficulties had to be encountered in Spain, and not even an attempt was

* See p. 14, *seq.*

made to recover Gaul and Britain, while a new race of conquerors was soon to appear in Italy to snatch that peninsula from the iron grasp of its Byzantine oppressors. In Spain the Byzantine arms were indeed for a time so successful as to conquer the southern and south-eastern coast districts, and even to penetrate into the interior ; but it required immense efforts to carry on the war in that distant country, and the Visigoths were still so powerful, that Justinian was obliged to be satisfied with small advantages, and to leave the rest to the future.

12. The last wave in the tide of the national migrations brought down upon Italy the Longobardi or Lombards, a German tribe, which probably derived its name from its original home, the "long bord" of the lower Elbe, and had gradually migrated southward into the countries about the Danube, once occupied by the Goths. Odoin, their ninth king, became the ally of the Emperor Justinian against the Ostrogoths and Gepidae. His son and successor, Alboin, was involved in many wars against both German and non-German neighbours, from which he acquired great renown by his valour and the success of his arms. In conjunction with the Avars, he succeeded, in 566, in destroying the kingdom of the Gepidae, between which and the Lombards there had existed an implacable enmity. Cunemund, the king of the Gepidae, was killed in battle, and his daughter, Rosamund, now became the wife of Alboin, who had previously been married to a Frankish princess. The remaining Gepidae joined the Lombards, and Alboin assigned the greater part of their country to the Avars, as a reward for their services. The Lombards, at this time, occupied nearly the same extent of country which had formerly been inhabited by the Ostrogoths before their invasion of Italy. As some of the Lombards had already become acquainted with Italy during the campaign of Narses, from 552 to 555, Alboin was easily prevailed upon to make an attempt to win the fair peninsula for himself. In 568 he broke up with his whole nation, accompanied by 20,000

Saxons and other German and Slavonic tribes, and having crossed the Julian Alps, conquered the plains of northern Italy, where scarcely any resistance was offered to him. Flavius Longinus, the Byzantine governor of Italy, was unable to check the progress of the conquerors, whence the whole country between the Alps and Apennines, with the exception of Ravenna, Genoa, and a few other Ligurian coast towns, together with nearly the whole of Tuscia, fell into the hands of the invaders. Most of the Lombards were still pagans, and those who had adopted Christianity had embraced the Arian heresy; the Catholic prelates in the north of Italy fled in dismay and fear of the barbarians. Pavia sustained a siege of three years, but was taken in 571 and made the capital of the Lombardic kingdom. Meanwhile the Lombards extended their conquests southward, and the Byzantines maintained themselves only in detached and isolated places, such as Ravenna, the Ligurian coast towns, Rome, Naples, the country of Calabria, and the southern extremity of Apulia, Beneventum being the extreme point in the south that was seized by the Lombards. As the possessions of the Byzantines were thus broken up and scattered over different parts of the country, while the intervening districts were in the hands of the enemy, it was impossible to carry on the war on a great scale; the Byzantine commanders, moreover, were ill supported by their government, and were obliged mainly to rely upon their own resources and the attachment of the people among whom they were stationed.

During the progress of the conquest of the Lombards we never hear of a regular division of the land. The oppression under which the Italians suffered was terrible, and the natural consequence was that, much as they had detested the system of extortion practised by the Byzantines, they hated and dreaded the Lombards still more. The latter, from the moment of their arrival on the south of the Alps, acted with the most relentless cruelty towards the conquered people, and the scanty

population of northern Italy was partly put to the sword, and partly reduced to a state of abject slavery. Even the towns, which in other countries maintained a certain degree of independence under their Germanic rulers, were treated by the Lombards with the same harshness as the open country. Almost all the landed property in the north of Italy passed at that time into new hands, the places of the natives being occupied by the invaders, whose numbers continued to be reinforced by fresh swarms of barbarians coming across the Alps and determined to obtain settlements in Italy. The Lombards, moreover, were the most notorious among all the German tribes for their wildness and vicious malice, whence, even in times of peace, the condition of their conquered subjects was far worse than that of any other country invaded by Germans. In addition to all this, the pagan and Arian Lombards united in cruelly persecuting the Catholics ; and Italy, the mother country of western Christianity, had the sad misfortune of seeing the orthodox faith not only oppressed and persecuted, but almost annihilated within her own boundaries, and its place occupied by a wild paganism and Arianism, which, with the Lombards, was not much better than paganism.

King Alboin was murdered in 573, before he could complete his conquest, at the instigation of his own wife, Rosamund, whom he is said to have wished to force at a banquet to drink out of the skull of her own father. After his death the Lombards gave the crown to Cleph, who conquered Beneventum in the south of Italy. After a reign of eighteen months he was slain by a person of his own suite, and the powerful dukes, thirty-six in number, among whom the conquered portions of Italy had been parcelled out, took possession of the royal domains, and governed the kingdom for a period of ten years without a king. This interreign was the most terrible time for Italy throughout the period of the Lombard dominion. The dukes resided in towns, and not in castles,

like the nobles among other German nations, and Italy thus remained the "country of towns," although the ancient municipal institutions were abolished, and each town was governed by a Lombard magistrate, called *gastalda*.

The further the Lombards extended their conquests, the less possible was it to extirpate the native population, and to destroy the remnants of the ancient civilisation ; in many districts, however, especially on the frontiers, as about Spoleto, Benevento, and in Tuscia, where petty warfare was continued almost uninterruptedly, the sufferings of the native population were almost indescribable : the national element and its civilisation were for a time completely crushed. The same was the case in the plains of the north, the real centre of the Lombardic kingdom. Rome being surrounded on all sides by the enemy, was constantly in the greatest danger of falling into their hands ; and it required the most incredible efforts of the small Byzantine garrison and the inhabitants of the city, to repel the frequent attacks of the assailants.

It was during this frightful period that many Roman families from the towns of northern Italy took refuge in the islands at the mouths of the rivers in the Adriatic, where numerous fugitives had already established themselves during the invasions of the Huns and other barbarians. Whole communities now organized themselves there in complete isolation from the rest of the world, and became a nation of fishermen and sailors, who not only took an active part in the commerce of the Adriatic, but extended their trade even to the Levant. Among these people the national character and language, as well as the orthodox faith, were maintained, and the state of Venice thus quietly and unobtrusively developed itself, while the rest of Italy was suffering unprecedented miseries under the dominion of its conquerors.

After the interreign of ten years, the Lombard dukes had gained the conviction that the struggle against the Romans and

Greeks could not be carried on with any hope of success, unless they were again united under one head. Each of them, accordingly, gave up a portion of the royal domains which had been seized after the murder of Cleph, whose son Authari was now unanimously elected king, 586. He was the first who made an effort to regulate the law concerning property; and his queen, Theodelinda, a Bavarian princess, who had been brought up in the Catholic religion, exercised considerable influence upon him, and a commencement was thus made of converting the Lombards to the orthodox faith, in which the queen was strenuously supported by the wise and politic measures of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604). As the Lombards were gradually adopting the language and manners of the conquered Italians, the influence of the Catholic clergy, who greatly excelled the Arians in learning and intellectual culture, was greatly increased. After the death of Authari, in 591, Theodelinda, who succeeded to the throne, and was permitted to select a second husband from among the Lombard nobles, chose Duke Agilulf of Turin, who was then formally proclaimed king in an assembly of the people at Milan. He concluded peace with the Franks, took from the Byzantines the towns of Padua, Cremona, and Mantua, forced the Pope to purchase the departure of a besieging army from Rome, and vigorously maintained his authority against the haughty dukes. In 605, he made his son Adelwald his colleague on the throne, who, on the death of his father, in 616, succeeded him as sole king. As his mother Theodelinda displayed great liberality towards the orthodox church (she founded among others the church of St. John the Baptist at Milan, at which the iron crown of the Lombard kings was preserved), and as Adelwald himself, guided by her counsel, protected the native Italians against the violence of the Lombards, his own people rose and deposed him in 626. Ariowald, a son-in-law of Theodelinda, was then raised to the throne, and during his reign (626-638) Catholicism

continued to gain ground, though the hostile collisions with the Pope did not cease.

After Ariowald's death, his widow chose Rothari for her second husband, who now became king (638-652). Rothari was an Arian, but by the celebrated code of laws which he promulgated in 644, and which was entirely based on the national usages and institutions of the Lombards, he laid the foundation of a better organization of the state. He also gained some advantages over the Byzantines, from whom he wrested the towns of Tuscia and those on the coast of Liguria. His son Rodwald, who was slain soon after his accession, in 654, was the last of the descendants of Theodelinda ; but the Lombards even now could not make up their minds to select a king from another family, and chose Aribert, a son of her brother (654-663), who, being a Bavarian, was of the Catholic faith. His reign passed away in peace, and towards the end of his life he made arrangements for dividing his kingdom between his two sons. But this design was disapproved of by the Lombard nobles, and Grimoald, duke of Benevento, after murdering one of Aribert's sons, usurped the throne (663-671). He was successful against the Byzantines, and completed the conversion of his own people to the Catholic faith. By this means, however, and by his hostility towards the family of his predecessors on the throne, he caused a long succession of disturbances ; and during the struggles in which, after the expulsion of Grimoald's son, the relatives of Theodelinda, supported partly by the Franks, and partly by the Bavarians, disputed the succession with one another, the dukes, whose power appears to have been hereditary from the first, made their position more and more independent. At length, in 712, Liutprand, an able ruler, was called to the throne : he supplemented the laws enacted by his predecessors, and endeavoured to effect a thorough amalgamation of the Lombards and Italians. His grand object was to unite all Italy, but the policy of the papal court was to prevent

such a consummation at any cost, even if it should be necessary to call in the aid of other barbarians. Liutprand, therefore, yielding to the remonstrances of Pope Zacharias, gave up the idea of conquering the territory of the Roman see. On his death in 743, Rachis, Duke of Friuli, was elected king, and not only made to the Pope the same concessions as his predecessor, but was even prevailed upon, in 749, to abdicate and withdraw into a monastery, leaving the government to his brother Aistulf (749-756). The new king took several towns from the Byzantines, and among them even Ravenna, the seat of the exarch, and thus drove the Greeks from their last strongholds in northern Italy; but when after this he began to direct all his energy against Rome, Pope Stephen II. applied to the Frankish king Pepin for protection. The Pope even went to France in person, anointed the king as a Roman patrician, and implored him to come to the rescue of the holy see. At a meeting of the Frankish nobles at Brienne, it was resolved to support the Pope. Pepin himself would willingly have avoided a war, but as his mediation was rejected, he crossed the Alps, laid siege to Pavia, and compelled Aistulf to promise that he would restore to the papal see what he had taken from it, and pay in addition a large sum of money. When, however, the Lombards, instead of fulfilling these promises, blockaded Rome, Pepin in 755 returned, and forced the Lombards not only to keep their engagements, but to surrender the third part of the royal treasury, and pay an annual tribute. Aistulf died soon after these events, and through the influence of the Pope, Desiderius, Duke of Tuscia, was raised to the throne. For some time he maintained a good understanding with Rome, by adhering to the terms of peace with the Franks, but this did not last long, and it was not without difficulty that he kept his position against the powerful dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, who were supported by both the Pope and the Franks. A reconciliation between the Pope and the Lombards was once more

brought about by Pepin, but the alliance between the latter and the Pope became daily closer and closer, and ultimately led to the dissolution of the Lombard kingdom in 774, the details of which will be related in the history of the Franks.

At the time of the overthrow of the Lombard monarchy, the Lombards and their native subjects were completely united as one nation, the Lombards having adopted the language, religion, and civilisation of their subjects. Italy, which had thrown off the yoke of the followers of Odoacer, and even that of the mild Ostrogoths, had now for more than two centuries been obliged to submit to the fiercest and most cruel of all the Germanic tribes. During the first period of the dominion of the Lombards, when the very existence of Christianity and Roman civilisation in Italy was seriously threatened, the Italians, and especially the city of Rome, were roused to an almost unprecedented zeal and vigour in the defence of the inheritance of their ancestors. The spirit of ancient Rome was once more called into action, and was embodied in Gregory the Great, a man descended from an ancient patrician family, who had once been raised to the dignity of prefect of the city—the highest secular office at Rome. When sent as ambassador by the Pope to Constantinople, he showed the greatest circumspection and talent for business. After his return, being weary of the almost hopeless condition of worldly affairs, he withdrew into monastic seclusion, and it was only owing to a strong sense of duty that he ultimately allowed himself to be raised to the episcopal see of Rome, to which he was called by the unanimous desire of all parties. Firmly believing that the dominion of the barbarians in Italy could not be lasting, he kept up a kind of conspiracy throughout the peninsula against them, though he neglected no opportunity of winning them over to the orthodox faith. At the same time he vigorously opposed both the assumption of the patriarch of Constantinople, who claimed to be the head of all Christendom, and the despotism

of the eastern emperor. In the midst of the calamities into which Italy was plunged, and the efforts he had to make in opposing the barbarians, he was unwearied in his exertions to maintain and extend all over Europe the orthodox faith under the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and before his death he had the satisfaction of seeing it established in all the Germanic kingdoms which had been founded in the provinces of the western empire.

What progress the Lombards had made in civilisation during the later period of their kingdom, is manifest from the fact that one of them, Paul Warnefried, commonly called Paulus Diaconus, distinguished himself as a man of high Christian culture. His mind had been thoroughly trained by the study of the ancients, and he even occupied himself with teaching Greek. He spent the latter part of his life as a monk in the monastery of Monte Casino, and wrote a history of the Lombards in Latin, for which he had made extensive studies in their national legends and traditions. The Lombardic laws, the collection of which had been commenced by King Rothari, and was completed by his successors, continued in force long after the Lombard kingdom had ceased to exist, and exercised great practical influence at a later period of the middle ages in establishing the freedom of the Italian cities.

13. Italy, the heart and centre of the western empire, had suffered during the migration of nations more severely than any other of the invaded countries ; for while Gaul, Spain, and Britain remained for centuries under the dominion of the immigrants who first took possession of them, Italy, in less than a century, had been the prey of three successive swarms of barbarians, the hordes of Odoacer, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards, the last of whom alone maintained themselves in the peninsula for upwards of two centuries and ultimately amalgamated with the natives. The same amalgamation of the conquerors and the conquered took place

in Gaul and Spain, but in Britain the Germanic element remained pure, and developed itself unchecked and unmixed with any foreign nationality. The Vandal kingdom in Africa had been swept away, leaving scarce a trace of its former existence ; and with this single exception, all the countries in which Germans had settled, had commenced a new period of development, both social and political. The new political institutions were based upon the ideas of the conquering tribes, but were greatly modified by the course of events, the ancient laws and institutions of the Romans exercising an important influence upon them. But far greater was the influence of Christianity, though its operations were but slow and gradual. In this manner were formed two institutions, which give to the middle ages of European history their peculiar character and colouring—the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the feudal system, both of which were founded during the first centuries subsequent to the overthrow of the western empire.

Ever since the time when Constantine the Great raised Christianity to the rank of a state religion, the Church was indeed in many respects dependent on the State, but nevertheless maintained its own authority in various ways, and the clergy, who gradually became a wealthy, powerful, and well-organized body, exercised an influence which in its turn greatly affected the political development of the state. Among the German nations established in the provinces of the western empire, Christianity, as we have seen, was gradually adopted, though at first most extensively in the heretical form of Arianism, and the clergy soon acquired great weight and authority among the untutored barbarians ; for the ruder and more uncivilized the new converts were, the more they felt the want of religious guides, and the reverence and gratitude felt towards the church and the intellectual superiority of the clergy, led the pious barbarians to enrich the church with splendid gifts and legacies, without which, in the circumstances of the times, it could scarcely have attained

its great objects of promoting piety, educating the people, and comforting the poor and oppressed. Among the Arian Christians the church could not rise to the same importance and authority as among the Catholics, who had a central point in their metropolitan bishop of Rome. Moreover, although the greater part of the conquering barbarians were attached to the Arian creed, the Bishop of Rome was looked up to as the greatest authority by the Romanized provincials, who were all Catholics ; and as the eternal city had once been the political mistress of the world, so now her bishops made the greatest and most systematic efforts to strengthen and extend their spiritual influence over the countries that once composed the western empire. The result was, that the creed of the Roman or Catholic Church was ultimately adopted by all the barbarians who had settled in the provinces of the west, and none of the Roman pontiffs displayed more prudence and energy in the missionary work than Gregory the Great, under whom a school for missionaries was established at Rome. The success with which his efforts were crowned, gradually removed the fierce religious discord which had until then prevailed almost everywhere between the Roman provincials and their conquerors.

Monasticism, which had originated in the East, acquired a new importance in the countries of the West, and at a later period of the middle ages exercised a great influence on the church itself. The monks of the East led a life of tranquil contemplation, while in the West they were obliged to take an active part in the practical business of life. This spirit was introduced into monastic life by Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Casino, near Naples, who died in 544, and whose rule became the standard for all monastic orders in Europe. The solitary life in woods, spent in idle contemplation, was little calculated to find favour in the West, where the very climate seems to have made men's minds more sober and their imaginations less heated. Hence the monks in the western coun-

tries, independently of religious contemplation, which was an essential point in monastic life, were enjoined to engage in manual labour, principally agriculture, in study, in copying books, and in instructing the young ; and by this means the monasteries during the turbulent periods of the middle ages formed admirable places of refuge for those spirits who had grown weary in the perpetual turmoil of life, and the sole seminaries from which art and literature spread their beneficent rays over the outer world.

The object of the German invaders of the Roman provinces had not been so much plunder and booty, as to settle in the conquered territories and acquire landed property ; but the land thus obtained they had to defend, sword in hand, against the overwhelming numbers of natives. In Gaul, as we have seen,* the case was somewhat different, but in the other provinces the conquerors were obliged to maintain their character as warriors. The chief or king had to reward his followers with portions of the conquered territories, and this was done on condition of their being at all times ready to serve him in the protection of his conquests. The king no doubt everywhere took possession for himself of the Roman domain land, while a large portion of the private estates was taken from the natives and given to his faithful followers, under the title of *beneficia*. The mode in which this distribution was made, was not the same in all parts of the empire : in some the invaders acted more harshly than in others, according to their own character, numbers, and the extent of territory conquered. But nowhere did the Germans display greater cruelty than in Britain, where they aimed at nothing short of the entire annihilation of the native population, and the few survivors who had not succeeded in making their escape, were reduced to slavery. The Vandals in Africa acted in nearly a similar manner. The Visigoths and Burgundians treated the Roman provincials more mildly, taking

* See p. 21, *seq.*

for themselves two-thirds of the conquered territory, while the Ostrogoths in Italy were satisfied even with one-third, which they took from the Heruli, their predecessors. The Lombards again, who, at the time of their invasion of Italy, were still very rude and barbarous, do not appear to have made any regular division of the land, but forcibly dislodged the large landed proprietors, and compelled the smaller ones to pay one-third of the produce of their estates. There seems to be no doubt, that in most of the Roman provinces the lands were distributed by lot among all the freemen who had taken part in the conquest, and receiving the land as freehold property, they formed a numerous class of free landed proprietors. But the immediate faithful followers of the kings (*vassi*, *vassals*), received their grants (*feod*, *feudum*, or *beneficia*) out of the extensive domains, on condition of their performing military service ; and these grants seem at first to have been made only for a time, but afterwards they were held for life, and even became hereditary, though always subject to the original condition of military service.

The arrangements in the distribution of land in Gaul were of a somewhat peculiar nature, but are of special importance, because, owing to the extension of the Frankish monarchy, they became the foundations of the political institutions, not only of France, but of Germany, Italy, and England. It is to be regretted that our information concerning the origin of these institutions, commonly called the feudal system, is extremely meagre and fragmentary. The following, however, may be regarded as the most essential features. The hereditary succession of the Merovingians was firmly established, at least among the Salian Franks, at the time when Clovis made himself master of Gaul. After the conquest of the country, the king was the lord paramount or proprietor of all the land which had not been parcelled out as freehold or allodial property among his free warriors or was still in the hands of the natives. Out of the extensive domains set apart for the king, and technically called the *fiscus*,

he assigned large estates to his favourite or most distinguished followers, under the title of fiefs (*feuda*) or benefices, in return for which they had to serve the sovereign against foreign and domestic enemies. But what the favoured followers thus obtained, was not a right of property, but a mere license of possession, the king or granter being still the owner, so that the actual occupant might be removed from his possession, if he incurred the displeasure of the sovereign. But in the course of time such fiefs, from being originally precarious and arbitrarily revocable tenures, became hereditary. Even in this last stage of development, however, the ultimate property was held by the king as lord paramount. The duties between him and the feudatory were mutual, though at first not so fully defined as at a later period. A person who thus held lands of the king, might subdivide his estates, and grant a portion or portions of them to sub-feudatories, towards whom he then occupied the same relation as that in which the king stood to himself. These sub-feudatories again might subdivide their sub-fiefs, and the subdivision might in fact go on as long as the land was capable of it. Many links in the feudal chain might thus intervene between the original granter and the actual occupant of the soil, and the seignorial hierarchy, in the course of time, could not but lead to great confusion. During the turbulent commotions of the middle ages, it soon became manifest, that allodial or freehold property was less secure than that held in fief, as the freeholder had no claims to the protection of a feudal lord. Hence numerous allodialists gave up their free property to some neighbouring lord, to receive it back from his hands as a fief upon the ordinary feudal conditions. The terms on which ecclesiastical property was held, were of a similar nature, for the prelates and abbots had to swear fealty (fidelity) for their lands to the king or other superiors; and by subdividing their grants among others, especially gallant and powerful knights, they secured protection for themselves, and acquired the means

of performing those duties which were demanded of them by the lord paramount. Towns and cities also had their feudal lords, who had obtained their rights either by conquest, or as a voluntary tribute from places requiring their protection. The jurisdiction of the lords over such towns, varied according to the different manner in which the feudal rights had been acquired.

Such is an outline of the feudal system, which, notwithstanding much that was dangerous and inconvenient, afforded many advantages, especially in an age when might was commonly regarded as right. The spirit of the system was thoroughly aristocratic, and the feudal aristocracy soon appeared as the natural antagonist of the monarchy, at whose expense it was ever endeavouring to aggrandize itself. Each baron was, or claimed to be, a petty sovereign in his own sphere, and to exercise the rights of sovereign independence, which alone was a fruitful source of war. The feudal aristocracy at the same time displayed an equally aggressive spirit upon the commonalty, or the class of people below it.

The freemen in Gaul were very numerous, consisting partly of Romanized Celts, and partly of Franks, who, although they were the conquerors and enjoyed several advantages, yet stood in many respects on a footing of equality with the original inhabitants. Hence the amalgamation of the provincials and Germans was effected in Gaul with greater facility than anywhere else. We have evidence, that in the wars of the Merovingians the Romanized Celts were even called upon to serve in the army, from which, in other countries, the German conquerors strictly excluded the natives.

If we sum up the consequences arising out of the conquest of the provinces of the empire by the German nations, the following points deserve to be specially noticed :—

A. The power of the conquering chiefs or kings was increased, inasmuch as they remained at the head of a permanent army

of conquerors, and exercised over the conquered people as unlimited a sway as had been done before by the Roman emperors. The consequence of this circumstance was that an ambitious or despotic prince might without much difficulty reduce his German followers to the same absolute rule as the conquered provincials. The king appointed all his military and civil officers, and in most cases surrounded himself with the courtly pomp and ceremony borrowed from the western or eastern empire, and the clergy contributed not a little towards spreading the idea that he was called to his position by a special act of the Divine grace. But, notwithstanding all this, the kingly power still continued to be limited, inasmuch as the consent of the nobles was required for all the acts of the king in his capacity as sovereign ; and even the succession to the throne was in most cases determined by an election of the nobles, at which the free warriors also seem to have had some voice.

B. The feudal system, as we have seen, gave rise to a new kind of nobility which, in the end, became hereditary ; but, according to the different services which the feudal possessors of land had to perform, the nobility was divided into three classes. We have *first*, a military nobility, consisting of the immediate followers of the king, who trained their sons from their earliest years to the use of arms in his service. *Secondly*, as feudal estates were granted also to civil officers, and as for the proper discharge of the duties connected with the civil administration, a certain knowledge of ancient customs and usages was required, there arose an official or civil aristocracy. In this case, too, fathers brought up their sons to their own profession, and their rank became hereditary. The *third* class may be termed the court nobility, fiefs or benefices being granted to men for services at the court, where willingness and readiness were more necessary than either valour or skill and knowledge.

c. The German freemen in the conquered countries gradually

lost their political rights and privileges, in proportion as the feudal aristocracy and the military monarchy were more developed ; and they ultimately became dependent on the king and the rapacious aristocracy. The Roman provincials in several of the new states at first retained their freedom, especially the small landed proprietors ; while the owners of large estates, who had formed the Roman provincial nobility, joined the immediate followers of the king—such at least was the case in Gaul. The municipal self-government of towns was preserved in many cases.

D. The majority of the original inhabitants of the conquered provinces lost their political freedom ; even the inhabitants of many Roman towns became tributary, and gradually sank into the condition of serfs. In country districts, German freemen lived side by side with the old Roman coloni. Slavery continued to exist both in the ancient Roman form, and in that which had from time immemorial been customary among the Germans themselves.

CHAPTER II.

THE EASTERN EMPIRE, AND THE EAST GENERALLY, UNTIL THE RISE OF MAHOMEDANISM.

1. The north-east of Europe ; 2. The eastern empire until the reign of Justinian ; 3. Reign of Justinian (527-565) ; 4. Successors of Justinian until the conquests of the Arabs.

1. WHILE in the western parts of Europe some kingdoms were permanently established, and others after a brief existence had to give way either to the victorious arms of the Byzantine empire, or were in their turn overwhelmed by other more powerful hordes of barbarians, the north and east of Europe,

being the quarters from which the conquering nations had issued, necessarily underwent considerable changes. Large tracts of country in the north and east of Germany, having been evacuated by their original Germanic occupants, seem to have forthwith been seized by tribes of Slavonic origin, which thus spread along the coasts of the Baltic, and advanced far into the interior of what is now called Germany, so that the greater part of Prussia, Silesia, Saxony, Bohemia, and other districts, fell into the hands of Slavonians. The extensive plains in the south-east of Europe, the inhabitants of which are called by ancient writers Scythians or Sarmatians, had been subject in the course of events to the Goths and Huns, and the Slavonians and Wends, who, after the dissolution of the empire of Attila, appear in those countries, were no doubt descendants of the ancient Sarmatians. During the first centuries after the fall of the western empire, all the Slavonic nations were still pagans, and their religion with its dualism of Belbog, the radiant god, and Czernibog, the dark god, reminds us of the religion of the ancient Persians, and suggests an original connexion between these nations, which is fully borne out by the nature and structure of their respective languages.

2. At the time of the overthrow of the western empire, the eastern or Byzantine empire was governed by Zeno (474-491). During the migration of nations, the emperors had sometimes contrived to avert the devastating inroads of the barbarians by directing their course towards the west, and thus purchased their own safety by sacrificing the western half of the empire. The eastern empire continued its miserable existence for nearly a thousand years longer than that of the west; but although it was not kept together by any great idea or by the virtues of its subjects, yet the ancient civilisation which had descended from better times, was there preserved for a long period, and shed upon the eastern empire a lustre which could not be claimed by any of the states in the south and west of Europe. There are,

however, epochs, such as the reigns of Justinian and Heraclius, during which its rulers were strong and bold enough to take the offensive against the invaders of the west, recovered Africa from the Vandals, Italy from the Ostrogoths, and portions of Spain from the Visigoths, while, at the same time, they drove the Bulgarians and Avars beyond the Danube, and the Persians beyond the Euphrates. But having exhausted its strength in these achievements, the empire was afterwards unable to defend or save its southern provinces from the conquering Arabs. Internally the empire was governed in the same way as the west had been under its last emperors. The soldiers, and especially the praetorians, were all-powerful, making and unmaking emperors ; but other internal feuds, such as those between the parties of the court and the circus, and more especially the religious dissensions, which afflicted the state like a chronic disease, also contributed greatly to undermine its strength and vitality. We shall subjoin a brief survey of these religious disputes which have the greater claim upon our attention, because several of the sects originating in them still continue to exist in the East.

The contemplative disposition of the eastern nations was the more easily drawn into unprofitable religious and mystical speculations, the more their moral and physical energies had decayed. A practical conception of the real objects of Christianity can hardly be looked for in that quarter, though it cannot be denied that the disputes which originated in the East and were protracted for centuries, arose out of an unconscious desire to comprehend the real points of difference between Christianity on the one hand, and Judaism and paganism on the other. But ever since Christianity had been raised to the rank of the state religion in the Roman empire, worldly passions had become more and more mixed up with the religious disputes, and how little practical those disputes were is sufficiently indicated by the excellent remarks of the historian Procopius, who lived in the midst of them. "I cannot," says he, "overcome the dis-

gust to relate the things about which Christians quarrel ; for, I consider it foolish presumption to pretend to understand the nature of the Deity. Man, as far as I can see, is not able even to comprehend human affairs, much less is he in a condition to understand the nature of God. Accordingly, I will be silent upon such matters, that I may not unsettle those things which are sacred to others. All I know about God is, that He is infinitely good, and that He governs all things. Let him who knows more come forward and say it, whether he be a priest or a layman." In the midst of such discussions and influences, the dogmas of the church were gradually developed by six general or œcumenical councils. At the first of them held at Nicaea, in 325, in the reign of Constantine, the dogma about the Trinity was finally and formally recognised, the object of the assembled dignitaries of the church being to make clear the relation subsisting between Christ, God, and the world. At the second council, held at Constantinople in 381, the relation of the Holy Ghost to the other persons of the Trinity was the main subject of inquiry. The disputes afterwards turned to the consideration of the relation of Christ to the nature of man, a subject concerning which the four succeeding councils could not arrive at a definite opinion.

Apollinaris, a Syrian bishop, propounded the view that the Logos had assumed the complete nature of man, and he thereby laid the foundation of the doctrine of the two distinct natures of Christ, the divine and the human. This doctrine, however, did not become the subject of dispute, until the Syrian Nestorius, who objected to Mary being called the mother of God, was raised to the patriarchal see of Constantinople, and stirred up the jealousy of the clergy in that city. Cyrillus, the intriguing bishop of Alexandria, an opponent of Nestorius, contrived at the council of Ephesus, in 431, to obtain the condemnation of Nestorius by an assembly of his own partisans, before the arrival of the other members of the council. The

party of Nestorius, which was soon afterwards persecuted by the Byzantine court itself, was welcomed in Persia, and after causing the expulsion of the catholic or orthodox party from that country, established itself in Mesopotamia, Persia, the highlands of central Asia, and India ; and descendants of them are found to this day under the names of Chaldaean or Nestorian Christians ; sometimes they are called Thomas Christians. The followers of Cyrillus, however, being bent upon obtaining a still more explicit recognition of their theory, caused the so-called council of robbers, held at Ephesus in 449, to set forth the monophysite doctrine about Christ as the only orthodox view, although it had shortly before been condemned at Constantinople. Throughout these disputes, the Church of Rome endeavoured to mediate between the conflicting parties, and it was in this spirit that Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, in 451, summoned the fourth general council to Chalcedon, at which the doctrines of the Monophysites were condemned. This decree was the signal for a general outburst in Asia, Europe, and Africa, which lasted for thirty years, and during which victory repeatedly shifted its side, often depending upon some person of influence at court, or on the intrigues of some lady of rank. It was in vain that, in 482, the Emperor Zeno endeavoured to calm the heated minds of the Christians by his famous edict, called Henoticon, or edict of union ; in vain also did Justinian, in 553, convene a fifth council at Constantinople, at which an attempt at reconciliation was made by the condemnation of three Nestorians. The result merely was that the Monophysites completely separated from the orthodox church. And as the Nestorians maintained themselves in Asia, so the Monophysites have preserved their tenets in the Coptic church in Abyssinia and Egypt, and also in the Armenian church and some Christian sects in Syria. The sixth œcumenical council, held in 681 at Constantinople, led to the separation of the Monotheletae from the Catholic church, because, though admitting the two natures

in Christ, they maintained that He had only one will. These Monotheletae likewise still exist about Mount Lebanon under the name of Maronites.

At a later period, in 726, a different ecclesiastical war convulsed the church, and continued to do so for more than a century ; for in that year the Emperor Leo, the Isaurian, issued an edict forbidding the use of images in the churches of the empire. The cause of this interdict was probably connected with the spreading of Mahomedanism, which in its strictly monotheistic views reproached the Christians as idolaters. The party obeying and supporting the emperor's edict were called iconoclasts, from the fact of their destroying images wherever they found them, while those advocating the use of images were stigmatized as iconoduli or image-worshippers. For a long period after this edict, the emperors themselves wavered in their opinions, for while Constantine v. caused a council at Constantinople to declare the use of images to be heretical, and allowed their destruction to be carried on with the most unmitigated fanaticism, the Empress Irene stopped these proceedings, and the seventh œcumenical council held at Nicaea, while condemning the worship of images, sanctioned their veneration. After the time of Irene, the iconoclastic madness was revived, until in 842 the dispute was brought to a close by a Synod of Constantinople confirming the decree of the seventh œcumenical council. During these disputes and disturbances, the Church of Rome again took a middle course, and thereby acted as the patron of the arts, sanctioning their cultivation in the service of religion.

The political history of the empire, until the accession of Justinian in 527, is little more than the record of a gradual process of decay and dissolution. At the time when Odoacer overthrew the western empire, the throne of Byzantium was occupied by Zeno, who is said to have induced Theodoric the Ostrogoth to invade Italy, and is known in ecclesiastical history

as the author of the above-mentioned Henoticon. In 475, the year after his accession, Basiliscus, brother of the Empress Verina (Zeno's own mother-in-law), was prevailed upon to assume the imperial dignity, and compelling Zeno for a time to live in exile, endeavoured to maintain himself by favouring the party of the Monophysites. After a reign of twenty months, however, Basiliscus with all his family was delivered up into the hands of Zeno, who now recovered his throne ; but insurrections still continued to disturb the peace in several parts of the empire. Zeno was married to Ariadne, the daughter of his predecessor Leo, and when he died, she married Anastasius, who, with the consent of the senate, the army, and the patriarch, was raised to the imperial throne, which he occupied for a period of twenty-seven years (491-518). An insurrection of Zeno's brother was easily put down, and its leaders compelled to take priests' orders at Alexandria. But another rebellion which broke out among the Isaurian mountaineers, lasted nearly six years, and ended in 498, with the transportation of a large number of Isaurians to Thrace. Meanwhile, Constantinople itself was disturbed by religious troubles and the factions of the circus, and the emperor himself had to restore peace by personal interference and humiliation. As soon as these and other calamities had passed away, the emperor relieved his subjects from the oppressive poll tax, called the *chrysargyron*, which was levied upon domestic animals as well as on men. From 502 till 508, Anastasius was involved in a war with the Persians, in which several of his armies were defeated, and Mesopotamia was fearfully ravaged, so that in the end he was obliged to purchase peace by paying eleven thousand pounds of gold to the enemy. While the war with Persia was still going on, there appeared on the banks of the Danube, the hitherto unknown nation of the Bulgarians, who crossed the river, and roaming over Thrace and Illyricum, spread devastation everywhere. They extended their inroads to the very vicinity of

Constantinople, and Anastasius tried to secure his capital by the erection of a strong wall across the isthmus, from the Propontis to the Euxine (507). At the same time, the empire was threatened by a nation called Huns, who plundered the provinces on the east of Mount Taurus, while hordes of Arabs made inroads into Palestine. During all these misfortunes, the emperor displayed great energy and the best will to relieve his subjects from unnecessary burdens ; but he was unable to do much.

After his death, Justin, prefect of the prætorians, was proclaimed emperor by the soldiers (518-527). He was a native of Thrace and an illiterate person of low origin, but showed considerable talent and energy. Vitalianus, a general of his predecessor, who had behaved with the grossest insolence towards his master, was enticed by Justin to come to Constantinople, and on his arrival he was, with many of his followers, put to death, while others were sent into exile. Justin gave full effect to the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon ; introduced strict discipline into the army, was fair and mild in his administration of the empire, and restored several cities, such as Corinth and Antioch, which had suffered from earthquakes. He also brought the administration of the finances into much better order than they had been in for a long time, and in this, as well as other matters, he was assisted by men of great ability, the most eminent among whom was his nephew, the Senator Justinian, whom a few months before his death he assumed as his colleague.

3. Justin was succeeded by his nephew, Justinian, who is sometimes surnamed the Great. He had been a Thracian shepherd, and had risen to the highest honours by the ordinary military career of the time ; but he was a man of great intelligence and energy ; he vigorously restored the mechanism of the state, paying special attention to the finances, which had been in an almost ruinous condition ever since the time of Marcian, and strenuously supported the cause of orthodoxy.

By these and other means he conferred upon the empire a power, both moral and material, which enabled him to take up the scheme of restoring the ancient Roman empire under his own sceptre. This plan, which had been cherished in secret by the Byzantine court for the last fifty years, was to a great extent actually realized by Justinian, who left the state in such a condition, that his ambitious successor, pursuing the same policy, almost accomplished what had been so successfully begun. His glorious wars abroad were indeed so many safety valves to the empire, preventing internal convulsion and revolution; but even as it was he had to struggle no less against domestic enemies than against barbarians who infested the frontiers of the empire.

There is nothing that sheds so much lustre upon the reign of Justinian as the exertions he made in matters connected with legislation. He seems to have felt it to be the duty of the surviving portion of the ancient empire to collect and preserve, for the use of posterity, the glorious legacy which the legal tact and skill of the Romans had produced. In the very first year after his accession, 528, a commission of ten men, headed by the learned jurist, Tribonian, was appointed to make a collection of imperial constitutions, with any corrections or improvements that might be thought necessary. The task was most speedily completed, and in 529 the emperor sanctioned and confirmed the collection known under the title of *Novus Justinianeus Codex*. In order to give the work all possible completeness, it was found necessary also to collect the opinions and explanations of the jurists of past ages, whose dicta had gradually acquired the power of law and were of equal authority as the imperial edicts. This task, which was undertaken in 530, was to be completed in ten years; but Tribonian and his coadjutors finished their work in less than three, and in 533 it was sanctioned and published under the title of *Digesta*, or *Pandectae*. This compilation was intended to pre-

vent all legal disputes and controversies, for which reason the emperor forbade all commentaries and the citation of all such explanations or expositions as were not contained in the Pandects. Justinian considered it further necessary that there should be an elementary or introductory treatise on the study of law, which might be put into the hands of students. This work, the composition of which was intrusted to Tribonian and three colleagues, was published under the title of *Institutiones*, with the imperial sanction, in the year 533. This book was likewise to supersede all previous treatises of the same kind. Not long afterwards Justinian's code was found to be deficient in many respects, because it contained none of the constitutions framed by the emperor himself, and a new collection of laws was added under the title of *Novellae*, that is, laws enacted during the reign of Justinian himself. The Justinianean code was published in 534 in a new and improved edition, and the earlier one was carefully suppressed. The whole body of these legal works is well known under the name of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*; they are works which, notwithstanding all their faults, deserve the highest commendation. They have long exercised, and still continue to exercise, a most extraordinary influence upon the legislation of almost all European countries. Much as they have done to advance and elucidate the principles of civil law, it cannot be denied that for many centuries they have at the same time been the bulwark of despotism.

In the year 532, the celebration of Justinian's accession gave rise to most bloody scenes in the city of Constantinople. The orthodox or court party, called the Blues, by its insolent conduct during the celebration of the games in the circus, towards the party of the Greens, induced the latter to invoke the protection of the emperor himself, and when he punished the ringleader of each party, both united against the court: for five days Constantinople presented the most frightful scenes of

murder, bloodshed, and fire ; and the danger was so great that the emperor himself was on the point of embarking on board a ship and abandoning his capital, when his courageous wife, Theodora, who had once been an actress, stopped him by saying : “ I will remain, and like the great men of old, regard my throne as a glorious tomb.” The Blues were at length propitiated by a stratagem, and Belisarius, the most illustrious among the imperial generals, letting his soldiers loose among the Greens, caused 30,000 of them to be cut to pieces. This insurrection is known in history by the name of Nika, the watchword of the rebels being *νίκη*, or victory. During these disturbances the imperial palace was much injured, and the church of St. Sophia, which had been built by Constantine, was destroyed by fire ; but it was afterwards restored by Justinian.

We have already had occasion to relate¹ how Justinian, through his able generals, Belisarius and Narses, recovered Africa by destroying the kingdom of the Vandals, 534 ; how after a long war (535-553) he recovered Italy from the Ostrogoths ; and how he took a considerable portion of Spain from the Visigoths ; but simultaneously with these wars in the west, he had to carry on others in the east and in the north. A war against Persia, with which the empire had been at peace for a period of a hundred years, if we except a brief interruption in the reigns of Anastasius and Justin, broke out in the year after Justinian’s accession, in consequence of the Emperor Justin having refused to adopt Chosroes Nushirwan, the son of the Persian king Cobad. The Persians began hostilities in 528, by driving away the workmen engaged in fortifying the city of Dara in Mesopotamia. The management of the war was intrusted to Belisarius, who was at first victorious, but in the end lost the battle against the Persian general Azarethes. Still, however, by skilful manœuvres, he saved the Asiatic provinces of the empire. Soon after this Cobad died, and his son

¹ See p. 13, *seq.*

and successor, Chosroes Nushirwan, anxious to establish peace with Byzantium, before entering upon the other undertakings he had planned against the east and south-west, commenced negotiations. Justinian consented to pay eleven thousand pounds of gold and abandon the country of the Lazi, who had become Christians and placed themselves under the protection of the empire. A peace was accordingly concluded in 533, in which both princes vowed an eternal friendship, which lasted scarcely eight years ; for in 540, Chosroes, instigated by the Ostrogoth Vitiges, and jealous of the conquests made by Justinian's generals in the west, invaded and ravaged Syria, destroyed Antioch by fire, and was threatening Palestine, when Belisarius, returning from Italy in 543, checked the victorious progress of the Persians ; but he was not able to recover Armenia, nor to win back the Lazi, who had suffered so severely from the exactions of their Byzantine protectors, that they returned to their allegiance with Persia. For a time hostilities now ceased, and Chosroes was engaged in extending his empire towards India, and establishing his influence in Arabia, which had become almost entirely dependent on him. After a time, however, when Belisarius had quitted Asia, the Lazi again renounced their connexion with Persia, and an imperial army sent against the latter in 555, gained a victory at the mouth of the river Phasis, and took possession of the country of Colchis, which was formally ceded to the empire in a treaty that was concluded in 562 and terminated the war. By the same treaty Justinian obtained freedom of conscience for the Christians living under the Persian dominion, but was at the same time obliged to pay a tribute of three thousand pounds of gold.

Meanwhile the Bulgarians, a new host of barbarians, had made their appearance in the north. They are said to have come from the country about the Volga, from which they are believed to have derived their name. They established them-

selves in Dacia, and while the imperial armies were engaged in the wars against the Persians, Ostrogoths, and Visigoths, the Bulgarians, after crossing the Danube, advanced to the very vicinity of Constantinople. Here it was again Belisarius who saved the empire. Having no army at his command, he assembled the guards of the palace and the inhabitants of the city, and with their assistance drove the barbarians back across the Danube. This happened in the year 559 ; but the year before, the Avars, another Asiatic people, had approached the banks of the Danube. Justinian induced them to take up their abode in Dacia, where he hoped they might be usefully employed in defending the empire against other barbarians ; but in this hope he was disappointed, for in the end he discovered them to be his most formidable enemies. In order to protect the northern frontiers of the empire, Justinian restored or built eighty fortresses along the banks of the Danube, while numerous others were established in Dacia, Epirus, Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly. The wall of Heraclius, which had been destroyed by an earthquake, and had enabled the Bulgarians to approach the capital, was likewise restored, and for a long time afterwards afforded the greatest protection to Constantinople. All other isthmuses of the empire were likewise fortified, and the banks of the Euphrates were made to bristle with forts like those of the Danube. The magnificent church of St. Sophia, with which Justinian adorned his capital, and which still exists as the great mosque of Constantinople, was only one of twenty-five churches which he built in that city, and numberless others were erected in all parts of the empire at the expense of the imperial treasury. Among other benefits which were conferred upon the empire in his reign, it deserves to be mentioned here that, in the year 552, two Nestorian monks, returning from China, brought with them the first silkworms, which were destined to create a new and important branch of industry in the western world.

The reign of Justinian, notwithstanding the occasional necessity of purchasing peace from foreign enemies, was outwardly more brilliant than that of any of his predecessors on the Byzantine throne. He was a man of tact, and justly regarded the preservation of the ancient forms of the government and administration as matters of vital importance to the existence of the state ; his weakness consisted in an invincible desire to gain personal distinction, to be himself the soul of the government, and to display the powers of a creative genius. This desire was easily gratified so far as his military ambition was concerned, for although he went beyond what might have been deemed prudent, yet whatever he did was in conformity with the traditional foreign policy of the Byzantine court, whose leading idea had always been the recovery of the whole empire. His wish to gain immortal fame by the erection of architectural structures, and by the promotion of the arts, found abundant occupation in the restoration or rebuilding of the great works which had been destroyed or injured by the barbarians in all parts of the empire. But this did not satisfy him ; he wanted to produce things which had never yet been accomplished, and his religious zeal led him to devote especial care to ecclesiastical structures. In rebuilding the church of St. Sophia, he actually succeeded in producing something to astonish both his contemporaries and posterity : the combination of the form of the ancient basilica, with the cupola, was a wonderful amalgamation of western and eastern architecture, and typical of the empire itself, consisting as it did of western and eastern elements. This church, moreover, was so gorgeously decorated with mosaics, precious stones, gold and silver, and costly utensils, as to dazzle the imagination, and enable the emperor to say that his temple surpassed that of Solomon. The sums he lavished upon his buildings in all parts of the empire, considerably exceeded the treasures at his command, and deprived him of the means which might have been more beneficially

employed in providing for his troops fighting in distant parts for the integrity of the empire. But all he seems to have thought of was to increase the admiration of his own genius, and this was after all only a momentary gratification, as it was impossible to procure the means required to keep in repair the numerous structures with which he adorned his dominions. Neither was his attempt to display his creative powers in matters of legislation crowned with the success which his self-complacent vanity had anticipated ; for, as we have seen, a new and improved edition of his code was found necessary soon after its publication, and even the new edition was not free from very serious defects.

Nothing, however, seems to have given Justinian so much satisfaction as his zeal in the defence of orthodoxy ; but in this respect, too, he was anxious to impress his own individuality upon everything he did, so as to combine the glory of a wise lawgiver with that of a pious ruler of the church. But the church had not yet learned unconditionally to succumb to the absolute will of the emperor, and hence, instead of producing unity among the conflicting parties, he increased their discord, and instead of establishing anything, he only unsettled what until then had been regarded as established upon the most solid foundations. Justinian always looked upon his own orthodoxy as above all doubt, because he had invariably shown himself as a most zealous supporter of the council of Chalcedon, at which the doctrine of the different natures in Christ had been finally settled. His object was to unite the Monophysites with the church, and this might indeed have been very desirable, but the means he adopted were not calculated to secure the end. The party of the Monophysites was very powerful at the court ; and the Empress Theodora, who exercised an unbounded influence over her imperial lord, was at the head of it. She prevailed upon him to abandon the idea of having recourse to violent measures, and persuaded him, that by some

unimportant concessions on the part of the orthodox church, the whole dispute might be peaceably settled. But the Monophysites were not satisfied, nor could they be deterred by certain violent measures into which the emperor was led from time to time by his capricious fancies. Thus, in 536, he appointed a Catholic to the patriarchal see of Alexandria, which produced a complete schism in the Egyptian and Æthiopian church, the majority of the native population in those countries obstinately clinging to their Monophysite doctrine. The court party at Constantinople, seeing that it was impossible to gain their end through the emperor, at last endeavoured to secure an ally in the person of the Bishop of Rome, and actually contrived, in 538, to raise Vigilius, after he had made a confession of faith almost entirely monophysitic, to the episcopal see of Rome ; but when he had been made bishop, and discovered the hostile attitude of the whole of the western church, he turned round and became a strenuous defender of the two natures in Christ. The council of Constantinople, in 553, was at last prevailed upon, in its servility to the emperor, to raise the doctrine of the Monophysites to the rank of orthodoxy. The fact that even the Bishop of Rome was obliged to give way, was a most serious blow to his authority in the western church, which began to lose its implicit faith in him, and regard him in no higher light than any eastern bishop, whose unprincipled servility to the will of the emperor had already become proverbial in the West. Justinian, however, went further and further, and during the latter years of his reign made still greater concessions to the Monophysites. In the East he was applauded for this, but in the West he was regarded as little better than an avowed heretic. Justinian's plan, moreover, was to raise the patriarch of Constantinople to the head of all Christendom, and to rule the whole church by his imperial edicts in the same manner in which he ruled the state. The church had until then been the

only asylum of a certain degree of freedom in the midst of imperial despotism, but Justinian was making great strides towards enslaving it also. His interference, however, roused a stubborn and fanatical opposition among those who still cherished some freedom of conscience, and thus gave rise to political as well as ecclesiastical confusion and disturbances. These evil consequences manifested themselves under his successors, and almost immediately after his death, in 565, it became evident that owing to his lavish expenditure, the resources of the empire were not sufficient to maintain those provinces which had been recovered by his able generals.

4. Justinian was succeeded by his nephew, Justin II. (565-578), whose recklessness in the expenditure of money was greater even than that of his predecessor ; and this extravagance gave rise to an unprecedented system of extortion and venality. Justin was not even able to maintain the most glorious conquest of Justinian, for it was in his reign that the greater part of Italy, the fairest province of the empire, was wrested from it by the Lombards. While his struggle against these new invaders was going on, he became involved in a fresh war with Persia, because he refused to pay the tribute secured to Chosroes by treaty, and because he took under his protection some of the tribes on the east of the Euxine which had renounced their allegiance to Persia. The war broke out in 572, and Marcian, an able general of Justin, obtained the command, but had himself to create an army. When this was done with great difficulty, and he was besieging Nisibis, he was unexpectedly recalled to Constantinople. The army, being then handed over to a person devoid of all military talent, dispersed, and the Persians advanced irresistibly westward : the great fortress of Dara was taken, and Syria fearfully ravaged. The news of these disasters so affected the emperor's mind that he became unfit to conduct the business of the state, which was left entirely in the hands of his ambitious wife Sophia. In

these critical circumstances, the empress prevailed upon him to adopt Tiberius, and a truce of one year was purchased of the Persians for forty-five thousand pieces of gold, which was afterwards renewed for three years, on the payment of an annual tribute of thirty thousand pieces. Meanwhile Chosroes was making conquests in Armenia, which had not been included in the truce, and the consequence was, that, on its expiration, Tiberius despatched a large army of mercenaries under the command of Justinian, who conducted the war with varying success; but the sending of his armies to distant frontiers left Greece unprotected against the inroads of Slavonian tribes. The Persian war was still going on with unabated fury, when Justin died, in 578. One act of his reign deserves general recognition; he issued an edict of universal religious toleration, in consequence of which the church for fifty years enjoyed a period of peace unprecedented in the annals of the Byzantine empire.

Justin II. was succeeded by his adopted son, Tiberius II. (578-582), a native of Thrace, who continued the war against Persia, and intrusted the supreme command to Mauricius, Justinian having been recalled. The dowager empress had hoped that Tiberius would marry her, but when, after his accession, it became known that he was already provided with a wife, she joined Justinian in a conspiracy against him. The plot, however, was discovered, and she was deprived of all power and influence. Chosroes of Persia was succeeded, in 579, by Hormisdas, whose armies were defeated in 580 and the following year. Tiberius' arms were equally victorious in Africa, where the Mauri had risen. In 581, Mauricius celebrated a triumph at Constantinople, and the emperor not only raised him to the rank of Cæsar, but gave him his own daughter in marriage. The brief reign of Tiberius was beneficial to the affairs of the empire, for he practised economy, abolished oppressive taxes, and left a well-stocked treasury.

His successor Mauricius, or Maurice (582-602), was a native of Cappadocia, and a descendant of an ancient Roman family. His reign, too, was a happy period for the empire, although it formed an almost uninterrupted succession of wars. The Persian Hormisdas, who had been completely humbled and obliged to conclude peace, soon began to think that he had made too many concessions, and renewed the war immediately after the accession of Maurice. During the first years the imperial armies, owing to various misfortunes, were unsuccessful, but in 586, Maurice's general, Philippicus, almost annihilated a Persian army in a battle not far from Dara. This great victory was followed by considerable losses, which, however, were retrieved by the brilliant achievements of Heraclius, who afterwards succeeded Maurice on the throne. But the mutinous spirit among the troops brought matters to the brink of utter ruin, until, in the end, Heraclius again, by glorious victories, restored the honour of the empire. While the Persians were thus hard pressed by the Greeks, they formed an alliance with the Turks, who were then established in Turkistan, the ancient Bactriana. Under the pretext of aiding the Persians, they advanced to the frontiers of Media ; but it soon became evident that they had formed a secret understanding with Maurice, and were ready to avail themselves of the first opportunity of attacking the Persians. Baram, a distinguished Persian general, perceiving the danger of his situation, turned against the Turks, and made such havoc among them, that thereafter they abstained from all further hostilities. Baram, the deliverer of the Persian empire, being rewarded with ingratitude from his master, raised the standard of rebellion against him. A general defection ensued, during which Hormisdas had his eyes put out and was deposed. Chosroes, a son of Hormisdas, being raised to the throne, undertook the war against Baram, but was beaten and obliged to take refuge in the Greek empire, and implore Maurice to assist him in recovering his throne.

The emperor, moved by compassion for the fallen king, sent a powerful army, commanded by Narses, against Baram, whose army dispersed, so that he himself had to seek refuge among the Turks, where he met with an untimely end. Chosroes II. now mounted the throne of his ancestors ; peace was then restored between the two empires, and Dara and Martyropolis in Mesopotamia were given up to Maurice. The friendly relation thus established with Persia continued to the end of Maurice's life.

The fierce and insolent Avars at this time occupied nearly the same extent of country as had once been ruled over by the Huns. A war against them broke out in 587, in consequence of the presumptuous arrogance of their chagan or khan. In the first campaign the barbarians were so completely defeated, that for the next five years they did not venture upon any further attack on the empire ; but a fresh war broke out soon after the conclusion of peace with Persia, and the imperial generals, owing to their inability, not only gained no advantage, but in 600 the army under Comentiolus suffered a severe defeat, and 12,000 men were taken prisoners by the Avars. Maurice refused to ransom them, though only a small sum was asked ; all were accordingly put to death, and this wholesale massacre roused general indignation against the emperor's conduct, both in the army and at Constantinople. The spirit of rebellion among the troops burst forth in the year 602, when the emperor ordered them to spend the winter on the northern banks of the Danube, for they thought that it was his intention to sacrifice them in that inhospitable country. The soldiers, therefore, making Phocas their commander-in-chief, marched upon the capital, and as there, too, a revolt threatened to break out, Maurice, with all his family, took to flight, seeking shelter in a church. Phocas, on his arrival at Constantinople, was proclaimed emperor, and Maurice with most of the members of his family being overtaken by emissaries, was put

to death. Maurice, though weak as a ruler, was one of the best among the Byzantine emperors, and amiable in all his private relations. He was a man of considerable attainments, and wrote a work on the military art which is still extant.

Phocas (602-610), a Cappadocian of base origin, was a monster of cruelty, but his brutal courage had made him a favourite among the soldiers. When he had satiated himself with the blood of his predecessor and his principal adherents, he basely purchased peace of the Avars, which, however, he was not long permitted to enjoy, for the Persian, availing himself of the specious pretext of avenging the murder of Maurice, invaded the provinces of the empire with his armies. The war thus begun, lasted twenty-four years, and was the most disastrous that had ever been carried on between the two empires. During the first eighteen years, the Byzantine empire experienced an almost uninterrupted succession of misfortunes : the whole country from the Euphrates to the Bosphorus was laid waste by the Persians, many once flourishing cities were reduced to ashes, and vast numbers of their inhabitants were led as slaves into the interior of Asia. While the war was carried on by inefficient generals, Phocas indulged his brutal propensities in the capital, and ordered Narses, the ablest soldier he had, to be burnt alive. His reign of terror led to several insurrections, which, however, were quelled by barbarous severity. The emperor's conduct, the ravages of the Avars, and the success of the Persians, produced general alarm all over the empire, and the various provinces acted, in point of fact, almost as if they were independent of the central government. A conspiracy was at last formed between a relative of Phocas and Heraclius, the exarch of Africa, from which country the necessary supplies were withheld. While the whole empire was thus in a state of consternation and dissolution, the Persians appeared at the gates of Chalcedon, opposite to Constantinople. At this juncture Heraclius, a son of the exarch of

the same name, appeared with a fleet before Constantinople, and in a short time made himself master of the city. Phocas was taken prisoner and put to death. Heraclius, the successful conqueror of the monster, was proclaimed emperor by the patriarch and the people, and recognised by the governors of the provinces. The complete dissolution of the empire was thus for the moment averted.

Heraclius' (610-641) reign forms the last period in the history of the eastern empire that really deserves the name of great and is calculated to enlist the sympathies of the historical student. At the time of his accession the empire was torn to pieces within, and attacked and ravaged on all sides by implacable enemies ; its ruin was imminent, and it required a great monarch to prevent its downfall. Heraclius was the man suited to the emergency, and had circumstances permitted it, he would probably have done still more to save the state from its deplorable condition. The countries between the Bosphorus and the Danube were overrun and ravaged by the Avars, Bulgarians, and Slavonians, and in 619 the barbarians advanced to the very gates of Constantinople. Heraclius did all he could to induce them to withdraw, and when at length, trusting to their promises to abstain from hostilities, he entered their camp to come to some understanding with them, the barbarians broke their promise, and the emperor would have been made their prisoner, had he not been saved by his good steed. After massacring all those who had accompanied the emperor, the barbarians, with about half a million of captives, retreated across the Danube. As Illyricum and the north-eastern frontiers of Italy were almost depopulated, Heraclius assigned those districts to the Servians and Croats, that they might serve as a barrier against the Avars ; and the Servians and Croats have continued to occupy those countries ever since. In Italy, the Lombards were carrying on the war successfully against the exarch, and Istria was then conquered by Slavonian tribes, whose descendants still

inhabit that country. The Visigoths not only recovered the parts of Spain which had been lost, but even conquered a portion of the opposite coast of Africa.

All these losses, however, were insignificant compared with those sustained in the east and south at the hands of the Persians. The war, renewed by them in the reign of Phocas, was continued after the accession of Heraclius by Chosroes II. : Syria and Palestine were conquered, and the Persian general Sarbar, in 615, took and plundered Jerusalem. In the year following, Egypt as far as Abyssinia, fell into the hands of the enemy. Chosroes, more than any of his predecessors, was determined to exterminate the power of Constantinople and Christianity throughout the eastern world, and therefore endeavoured to show his mortal enmity to both, not merely by momentary injuries inflicted upon them. With this view he had carried away from Jerusalem the Holy Cross, the most revered object in Christendom, and the loss of this precious relic startled the Christian world and gave rise to the idea that Christianity would have to succumb to the pagans. The loss of Egypt was felt particularly at Constantinople, which was almost entirely dependent upon the valley of the Nile for its supplies of grain, and famine was accordingly soon added to the other sufferings of the capital. Even Chalcedon was besieged and taken, in 616, by a Persian army ; but ten years later the place was recovered by the Greeks. In the midst of all these calamities, Heraclius remained unshaken, and after a useless attempt at negotiation, he secretly made preparations for some great undertaking ; when he thought the right time had arrived, he undertook in person the command of his armies against Persia, and made a series of the most brilliant campaigns for the deliverance of his empire. He had at first for a moment entertained the idea of giving up Constantinople, and of withdrawing to Carthage with the remnants of Christian and Greek civilisation ; but he had soon recovered from this

despondency : he formed his armies of the barbarous tribes on the Danube, especially of Slavonians and Bulgarians, and the church willingly sacrificed her treasures for their support. He began his operations in 622, by sailing with a well-disciplined army towards the coast of Cilicia, and having defeated the enemy in a pitched battle near Issus, forced his way northward into Pontus. In the following years he was equally successful, traversing Armenia and the countries about Mount Caucasus, in the latter of which he formed useful connexions, and afterwards concluded an alliance with the khan of the Khazars, who occupied the steppes on the north of Mount Caucasus as far as the Don and the Ural Mountains. With reinforcements from the countries in the north-east of Asia Minor, he then advanced into Media, as far as Ispahan. On his return he was attacked by an army, commanded by Chosroes in person, but completely defeated him. In 625, he marched westward through Mesopotamia into Cilicia to prevent Sarar making an attack upon Constantinople, which was known to be contemplated. A terrible battle was fought on the Sihun, in which the Persians were again defeated with great slaughter ; the emperor's personal valour and success made him the idol of his soldiers. But during the same year Chosroes concluded an alliance with the Avars, who for several years had abstained from making any hostile inroads, in order to create a diversion in his favour. Accordingly, in 626, the Avars again invaded Thrace and advanced upon Constantinople, while the Persians, traversing Asia Minor, took up their position on the shores of the Bosphorus. Heraclius, who was now encamped on the river Halys, sent one army into Mesopotamia, and himself with another proceeded towards Mount Caucasus, where he was joined by a powerful host of Khazars, and then marched into Assyria and Media. Constantinople, meanwhile, held out bravely, and as the Persians and Avars were unable for want of ships to unite their forces, the latter, after several reverses, withdrew, leaving

the Persian army under Sarbar in the country about Chalcedon, where he was in danger of being cut off from Persia, for in 627 Heraclius, near the ruins of Nineveh, routed the Persians in a pitched battle, and gained possession of some of the most important cities of Persia, where a fabulous amount of booty is said to have fallen into his hands. Chosroes fled into the interior of Persia, and having no army left, sent for that of Sarbar ; but the Persian general was induced by a ruse of Heraclius to conclude a separate peace with him, and Chosroes, being entirely forsaken and helpless, fled eastward, leaving all the west in the hands of his victorious enemy. Soon after this, in 628, Chosroes was put to death during a rebellion by his own son Siroes, who concluded a treaty with the emperor, in which the ancient boundaries between the two empires were restored, and the Holy Cross delivered up to the Christians. This glorious success against the most dreaded enemy of Christendom excited throughout the world the greatest joy and enthusiasm ; and when the emperor returned to Constantinople in triumph, ambassadors from the remotest parts of the earth appeared before him to offer their congratulations.

But the peace obtained by these bold and successful campaigns was not to be of long duration, for the provinces recovered from the Persians were soon to fall permanently into the hands of the Arabs, into whom, about that time, a new spirit of enterprise and conquest was breathed by their prophet Mahomed. In 629, as Heraclius was going to Jerusalem, he was met at Edessa by an emissary of Mahomed, who called upon him to adopt the new religion. Heraclius indignantly declined the proposal, but at the same time concluded a treaty of friendship with the prophet. Things might thus have gone on amicably, at least for a time, but a small frontier town of Syria, having been plundered by some Arabs, gave rise to a general war, in which Mahomed engaged all the more readily, as he knew that the Byzantine empire was in a state of great

exhaustion in consequence of the Persian war. The struggle with the Arabs was continued for many years by the prophet and his successors, and even before Heraclius died, in 641, Mesopotamia, Syria, including Palestine and Egypt, were annexed to the dominion of the Caliphs. During this latter period of his life, Heraclius no longer commanded his armies, but spent his time at Constantinople, immersed in pleasures and theological controversies, probably because his health and strength had been much enfeebled during the war against Persia.

Heraclius was succeeded by his sons, Constantine III., also called Heraclius II., and Heracleonas, whose reign lasted only a few months, and who were succeeded by Constans II. (641-668). The dynasty of Heraclius, to the great misfortune of the empire, retained possession of the throne for a period of seventy years after his death. This period is almost unequalled in the history of the world on account of the bloodthirstiness, the madness, and the refinements of base and disgusting cruelties in which the rulers indulged. Constans II. put to death his own brother Theodosius, and afterwards constantly dreamt about him, often awakening in the night, and crying out that Theodosius was holding a cup of blood to him, saying, "Drink, brother, drink!" Constantine IV., surnamed Pogonatus (668-685), ordered the noses of his two brothers to be cut off, because the troops of Asia Minor demanded that he should make them his colleagues, in order that there might be three equal rulers on earth as there were three in heaven. Justinian II., surnamed Rhinotmetus (685-695, and again from 704 to 711) acted most foolishly towards his foreign enemies, displayed great intolerance at home, and was under the influence of most contemptible persons, who distinguished themselves only by devising unprecedented cruelties. From 695 to 704 he lived in exile, but misfortune did not make him either wiser or better.

Under such contemptible rulers, the Byzantine empire sank lower and lower, presenting a spectacle that has probably never been equalled in history for baseness, corruption, and cruelty. The extent of the empire was more and more reduced : in the west by the Lombards, who continued to extend their conquests in Italy ; in the north by the repeated invasions of the Bulgarians ; and in the east and south by the Arabs, who not only made themselves masters of the large islands of the Mediterranean, including Sardinia, but made repeated attacks upon Constantinople itself. While thus one province after another was lost, the internal peace of the empire was almost constantly disturbed by civil and religious disputes. The death of one emperor and the accession of another were usually accompanied by insurrections, and dethroned emperors generally had their eyes put out, or were otherwise mutilated by ambitious wives or sons, or by powerful ministers and generals. The religious disputes during this period have already been briefly noticed. The constitution of the empire had, on the whole, remained the same as that established by Constantine the Great. The power of the emperors was quite absolute ; they were anointed and crowned by the patriarch of Constantinople, assumed the title of Roman emperors, and endeavoured to disguise their weakness by pompous titles, costly robes, and a punctilious court ceremonial. The armies in the provinces, however, like the praetorians of old, often successfully defied the authority of the emperor. The senate still existed, but was a mere name without power ; the only council that was occasionally consulted was the *Consistorium Principis*, consisting of the emperor's special friends and favourites. The consulship had existed nominally until the reign of Justinian, under whom it was abolished in 541. The provinces were governed by men who possessed almost unlimited power, but were obliged to pay to the imperial treasury a fixed sum of money—a regulation which was the source of oppression and discontent in the provinces, and sometimes even

led the provincials to prefer the dominion of rude barbarians to the system of extortion practised by the refined governors sent to them from Constantinople.

CHAPTER III.

THE FRANKISH MONARCHY FROM THE DEATH OF CLOVIS TO THE ACCESSION OF THE CARLOVINGIAN DYNASTY.

1. The sons of Clovis ; 2. Lothaire and his sons ; 3. General observations on the period—Lothaire II. ; 4. Dagobert I. ; 5. Gradual increase of the power of the Major domus ; 6. Pepin of Heristal ; 7. Charles Martel ; 8. Pepin le Bref, and end of the Merovingian dynasty.

1. CLOVIS had been carried off in 511 by a premature death in the midst of his career, and at a time when he might have shown whether he understood how to control and to grapple with the consequences of his brilliant conquests. According to the custom established among the Germans, he had divided his kingdom, as if it had been private property, among his four sons. Theodoric (Thierry or Dietrich), the eldest, who had been born while his father was yet a pagan, and was on that account regarded by some as having no claims to the succession, received the whole of Austrasia, that is, the eastern portion of the kingdom, or all the country to the east of the Meuse, the Moselle, and the range of the Ardennes ; this was essentially a German country, and Metz became its capital. The three younger sons by Clotilda received the rest, that is, Neustria, or the western Romanized portion of the Frankish kingdom ; the division among the three was made in such a manner that Lothaire, or Clotaire, obtained the country of the Salian Franks, and the greater portion of the dominions of Syagrius, with Soissons for its capital ; Clodomir received Armorica, extending

eastward to the district about Paris, with Orleans for its capital; and Childebert obtained Aquitaine, with Paris as his capital. From this moment the unity of the Frankish monarchy remained broken up for about half a century, but the common Frankish name and the identity of interests still formed a sort of ideal bond, the strength of which naturally depended upon the personal characters and dispositions of the rulers. A thorough and permanent union, however, independently of this division, was prevented by the custom of the Franks of leaving to the conquered people their own national laws and institutions; for thus it happened that between the German Austrasians and the Romanized Neustrians, who spoke a language formed from the Latin, a real national antipathy was developed. The four brothers resembled their father in valour no less than in barbarous cruelty, and their mother Clotilda often had great difficulty in restraining their murderous hands from one another. At first, however, their attention was engrossed by the desire of foreign conquest, and they endeavoured to satisfy their adventurous spirit by expeditions against the Burgundians, Thuringians, Visigoths, and Ostrogoths.

The three younger brothers, the sons of Clotilda, first united their forces for the purpose of putting an end to the Burgundian kingdom. They were instigated to this by their mother, whose feeling of revenge for the murder of her father was still unsatisfied. Her royal husband Clovis had indeed defeated the Burgundian king Gundobald, but in consequence of the interference of the Ostrogothic king Theodoric, he had been prevented from following up his victory. Gundobald accordingly remained in possession of his throne until his death in 516, though he was obliged to aid the Franks in their wars with other nations. The reign of Gundobald was very beneficial to his subjects, for he did much to bring about a reconciliation between the Arians and Catholics, himself setting a noble example of toleration; he also caused collections of Burgundian

(*Lex Gundobaldae*) and Roman laws (*Papiani Responsum*) to be drawn up for the two classes of his subjects. But these efforts, well meant as they were, could not check the progress of internal decay. The Burgundian and Roman nobles, in their opposition to the royal ordinances, were always sure to find supporters among the Franks, and the king's endeavours to reconcile the two parties of Christians among his subjects, only tended to increase their animosity. Gundobald was succeeded by his son Sigismund, who, being a Catholic himself, proclaimed, in 517, the Catholic religion as the only lawful form of Christianity among the Burgundians. But all this was of no avail, as became but too manifest in the war which the sons of Clotilda commenced against him in 523. Sigismund was made prisoner through the treachery of the monks of a convent which he himself had founded, and Clodomir ordered him with his wife and two sons to be thrown into a pit at Orleans. Godomar, Sigismund's brother, assembled the remaining forces, and successfully opposed the conqueror ; Clodomir himself perished by an ambushade, and his two brothers found themselves compelled, for the present, to give up their plans of conquering Burgundy.

Theodoric, the eldest and most powerful of the sons of Clovis, directed his attention eastward towards the part of Germany which bore the name of Thuringia, and formed an extensive kingdom from the Danube in the south to the Hartz mountains in the north, and from the frontiers of the Chattian Franks to the Elbe. This kingdom, even in the time of Clovis, was torn to pieces by feuds within the reigning family, and so seriously assailed by the Saxons in the north, the Avars and Slavonians in the east, and the Franks in the west, that it would have been unable to maintain itself, had it not been assisted by Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Hermanfred, the king of the Thuringians, was married to Amalaberga, a niece of the Ostrogothic king, who, during his lifetime, acted as the protector of the Thuringian monarchy ; but when he died in 526, the Frank

Theodoric seized the opportunity of attacking Thuringia. For this purpose he allied himself with his brother Lothaire and the Saxons, and, after several very bloody campaigns, conquered the Thuringian kingdom in 530. The greater part of it was then united with the East-Frankish kingdom of Austrasia, and the country north of the river Unstrut was ceded to the Saxons as a reward for their assistance, although they, too, are said to have been obliged, at least nominally, to recognise the protectorate of the Franks.

Soon after this conquest, in 534, Theodoric died, and his son and successor Theodebert allied himself with his uncles for the purpose of striking the final blow at Burgundy. This was accomplished, in 534, without much difficulty, by the united Frankish kings. Burgundy, however, though it acknowledged the supremacy of the Franks, retained its ancient constitution, and to some extent, even its political independence, inasmuch as henceforth it was usually given as a separate principality to a prince of the Merovingian family.

Theodebert continued the career of conqueror, which had been pursued by his father and grandfather, and availing himself of the enfeebled condition of the Ostrogothic kingdom, subdued the portion of Alemannia, which was still independent, and the country of the Boioari or Bavarians, though the latter still continued to be governed by its own dukes of the family of the Agilolfingians until the time of Charlemagne. The Saxons also are said to have been obliged to pay him an annual tribute of five hundred cows. Theodebert, in 539, even made a descent into Italy, taking part in the war between the Emperor Justinian and the Goths, and promising his support sometimes to the one, sometimes to the other party. He there succeeded in making himself master of a considerable territory, which he retained until his death. Theodebert was thus the most powerful representative of the Frankish name ; the Emperor Justinian himself, in spite of his dreams of universal empire, was obliged to treat

him as his equal, and the general belief at Constantinople was, that the Frankish monarch was contemplating the restoration of the Roman empire under his own sovereignty. His death in 548 freed not only the eastern emperor, but his two uncles, from great apprehensions. His son Theodebald, who was still under age, was scarcely able to keep together his inheritance, but died in 555 ; and as, three years later, 558, Childebert died without a male heir, the whole of the Frankish monarchy was once more united under the sceptre of Lothaire : it then comprised nearly the whole of France and Belgium, with a portion of Italy, and the south of Germany up to the foot of the western and central Alps.

2. But this union lasted only three years, for Lothaire died in 561, and his four sons again divided the empire among themselves. Charibert obtained Aquitaine ; Gontram Burgundy and Orleans ; Sigebert the conquered countries of Germany, henceforth always called Austrasia ; and Chilperic Armorica, the dominions of Syagrius, and the ancient country of the Salian Franks. The four brothers, like their predecessors, were animated by a desire to make conquests, but instead of attacking his foreign neighbours, each tried to aggrandize himself at the expense of his brothers. All idea of a unity of the Frankish empire vanished, and the brothers warred against one another without any regard to law or justice, right or wrong. The history of the Franks during this period consists of a succession of terrible wars among the members of the royal family, which, originating in ambition and love of dominion, were conducted with the bitterest personal animosity, and ultimately assumed the character of fiendish ravings of the nearest relatives against one another. Amid these scenes of suicidal feuds, the lifelong enmity between Sigebert of Austrasia and Chilperic of Neustria stands forth as one of the most terrible tragedies in all history. It was passionately fostered by the implacable hatred of their two queens, Brunehilde or Brune-

haut, the wife of Sigebert, and Fredegonde, who had once been the mistress of Chilperic, but had been raised as queen to the throne, when Galesuintha, his legitimate wife, and a sister of Brunehilde, had been put aside and murdered. In 576, Sigebert was murdered at the instigation of Fredegonde, and Brunehilde took vengeance by inciting Meroveus, Chilperic's son, to revolt against his own father ; but as Meroveus perished in the attempt, she caused his father to be assassinated, 584. As Chilperic's only surviving son Lothaire was still very young, Brunehilde's desire for revenge seemed to be satisfied ; but when, in 596, her own son Childebert II. died, the enmity which had till then torn to pieces the royal family of the Franks was transferred to the narrower circle of the ruling family in Austrasia. Theodebert and Theodoric, Childebert's sons, made war upon each other with the same infuriated bitterness which had characterized the previous war between Sigebert and Chilperic, and both were inflamed by their grandmother, Brunehilde, who contrived to stifle every desire of reconciliation. In the end, Theodebert being defeated and made prisoner by his brother, was murdered together with his son ; but Theodoric also died soon after, leaving behind him a son, Sigebert, for whom, as the last of her race, Brunehilde endeavoured to secure at least the possession of Austrasia ; but the event was soon followed by a general revolt of the nobles, during which Lothaire II., Chilperic's son, was raised to the throne, in 613. Brunehilde was put to death with cruel tortures, for after being taken prisoner she was seated on a camel, led through the whole army, and finally tied to the tail of the wildest horse.

3. During this frightful period, the refined vices and cruelties of the Romanized Gauls, and the barbarous brutality of the Franks combined to create a general despair and a belief that the end of the world was approaching. Christianity afforded consolation to the sufferers by pointing to a happier life to come, and was gradually preparing the way for a better organization

of the state and for an improved civilisation. The clergy did not indeed remain uncontaminated by the evils of the age, for it is specially mentioned that simony was prevalent throughout the empire of the Franks, particularly during the ascendancy of Brunehilde ; but the clergy alone had the courage and the power to oppose the savage violence of the rulers. They protected the humbler classes, the widows, the orphans, the poor, the prisoners, and the slaves ; slavery, in particular, was mitigated through the influence of the church. St. Eligius is said to have ransomed every slave that was to be had for money, and often liberated bands of a hundred slaves, especially Saxons, of whom whole herds were sometimes driven from their homes and sold in foreign lands.

During the civil wars which distracted the Frankish empire for nearly fifty years, the kings had very often availed themselves without scruple of every means that was calculated to humble their opponents ; but they had equally often been compelled to yield to circumstances, to feign friendship towards open enemies, and even silently to endure scorn and insolence. After the termination of these bloody struggles, the prestige which had once attached to Clovis and his race had almost entirely disappeared. The powerful nobles had become aware that by their aid alone one king had often been enabled to humble his opponent, and that their desertion had made him helpless. They had, further, become more closely connected with one another, and a certain *esprit de corps* was beginning to develop itself among them, though they had as yet no settled organization or legal privileges ; but they felt that they might easily obtain both, as the higher clergy of the realm had already gained similar advantages. The latter had been regarded even in the time of Clovis as the chief representatives of the church, and as such had been recognised as the highest and the only privileged class in the kingdom, and that not merely by formal marks of respect, but by substantial favours of different kinds.

The successors of Clovis continued the same policy towards the clergy ; and the Gallican church, which had already been in possession of vast territorial and other property before the Frankish conquest, now acquired such additions, that in point of wealth it surpassed all others. Kings devoted to her interests took care also to advance her power in other ways ; a succession of privileges were conferred upon a number of particular churches, and there was scarcely a bishop or a convent of any reputation, which could not boast of some distinctions of this kind. These privileges not only secured to the clergy their actual possessions, and afforded them facilities for acquiring more, but also conferred on them exemption from taxation, and surrendered portions of the king's revenue to the patron saints of churches, or their temporal representatives, the bishops and abbots. The wealth thus accumulated in the hands of the higher clergy gave them a commanding position ; but the kings soon discovered that this policy could not be continued without serious inconveniences to themselves. On the one hand, they felt that by honouring the church they were honouring themselves ; the glory and success of the Merovingians seemed inseparably connected with the church, for they had become great and illustrious throughout the world just because they had supported and favoured the orthodox faith ; but, on the other hand, they felt not a little embarrassed, for by their ever-increasing liberality towards the church, the immense territorial possessions which Clovis had set apart for himself and his family, and which he had justly regarded as the basis of his power, were visibly diminishing ; and even in the second half of the sixth century, Chilperic of Neustria, the son of Lothaire I., had declared : "The royal treasury is empty, our wealth has fallen into the hands of the church, and no one has any power except the bishops." The kings must further have felt that their own authority was declining in proportion as that of the church or individual bishops was increasing, more especially as the bonds

of union between the clergy and the nobles were becoming closer and closer. These two parties were drawn together by common interest, being the great landed proprietors of the realm ; both strove to make use of royalty for the purpose of consolidating and extending their own material power ; and it was of importance to both that the king in his actions should not be guided by his own personal inclinations, but by a special regard to their interests. The long-protracted civil war had been almost entirely the result of the personal feelings of the kings ; at first neither the ecclesiastical nor the secular aristocracy were strong enough to refuse taking part in the quarrels, while private interests and the love of war for its own sake prevented a rational calculation as to what might be the consequences. But the horrors which were perpetrated in those times, and the heavy losses and misfortunes which fell on almost all classes, gradually opened the eyes of both the clergy and the nobles. The consequence of this was, that the clerical and lay aristocracy of Austrasia and Burgundy, in 613, declared in favour of Lothaire II., in the hope of thereby putting an end to the perpetual warfare and bloodshed, which they had now come to recognise as utterly useless. This act restored the unity of the monarchy under one head, and the relation subsisting between the clergy and the nobles on the one hand, and the king on the other, assumed a character much more in accordance with the wishes and wants of the two estates. In 615, a council, consisting of seventy-nine bishops and a large number of laymen, met at Paris, and drew up what was called a perpetual constitution, decreeing the abolition of the imposts established by the sons of Lothaire I., the restoration to the nobles and the church of the property which had been taken from them, and solemnly confirming the privileges and concessions made to them. The constitution further granted to the clergy and the inhabitants of cities, the right of electing their bishops—subject only to the sanction of the king, an extension of ecclesiastical jurisdiction to which

alone the clergy were to be subject ; it forbade to condemn a freeman, or even a slave, without giving him a hearing, and finally threatened with death any one who should disturb the public peace. Lothaire, on ascending the throne, had to pledge himself to remove all grievances, and not to introduce any innovations in the political rights of the clergy and nobles without the consent of both. Their own corporate strength was now a sufficient guarantee to them that these promises were not made in vain.

The church having thus acquired a recognised position in the state, boldly advanced in her onward career. Her bishops gradually assumed the character of statesmen, though at first only by exerting their influence in protecting and maintaining that which they had already gained. But few only were satisfied with this, and most of the clerical dignitaries strove after still greater independence and still greater honour and glory, for the future greatness of the church seems to have already floated dimly before the minds of many. The kingly power alone was no longer able to inspire either great hopes or great fears, and in her alliance with the lay aristocracy the church felt tolerably secure. But this alliance was not without its dangers : so long as both had been opposed to the absolutism of the king, the dangers had been overlooked ; but both parties now began to perceive that each, at the expense of the other, was aiming at separate advantages, which neither could give up without sacrificing what had been gained by the previous contest.

The church claimed the first place in the state, founding its pretensions upon its material power no less than on its spiritual authority ; the lay aristocracy, which could found its claims only on the former of these grounds, and was destitute of any spiritual authority, felt its position to be dangerous. Its fears were increased by the simple consideration, that the territorial possessions of the church were ever increasing, and that, too, mainly

by gifts and foundations made by members of its own body, while; as a necessary consequence, the possessions of the nobles were ever decreasing. An ill feeling therefore soon arose between the allied estates, which ere long came to a violent explosion. The aristocracy charged the clergy with the same acts of injustice and violence with which the clergy had formerly charged the kings. The nobles of that period naturally possessed but few of the intellectual and spiritual resources which the church had at her command, though the efficiency of these resources naturally depended upon the religious disposition of those on whom they were employed; and all the threats of future punishments, all the promises of future rewards, and all the miracles that were or were pretended to be wrought, were but seldom able to break the rude insolence of the enemies of the church, especially as even men of dull intellects must have seen through the motives of the bustling activity of the clergy. Those who were more accessible to religious impressions, were influenced, on the one hand, by the strength of their desire after worldly riches and by their jealousy of the wealthy clergy; and, on the other, by the force of their religious sentiments. But their religious scruples were generally allayed by a doctrine proclaimed by the church herself, that pardon for every sin might be obtained by repentance, and that repentance could be best manifested by liberality towards the church. It was felt, therefore, that offences against the church herself might be atoned for in this manner; and many a noble who throughout his life had acted as the bitterest opponent of the church, purchased Heaven's pardon on his deathbed, by giving to her a moderate donation out of the possessions he had taken from her. One circumstance, however, the want of unity among all the nobles of the Frankish monarchy, operated to the advantage of the church; for from the moment that the king had been obliged to make concessions to the united efforts of the church and the nobles, the latter, owing to national and geo-

graphical differences, were never at one among themselves, although they might have been bound together by their common interest and by their opposition to both the crown and the clergy. The aristocracy of Austrasia, or the German portions of the empire, felt that there was a wide chasm between them and the nobles of the Romanized provinces of Neustria and Aquitaine, and the Burgundian nobility, too, claimed peculiar distinctions for itself. These national antipathies now began to develop themselves more and more, and the nobles of each nation claimed to be the first in the monarchy, looking upon the others as subservient only to their own particular interests. Such circumstances made unanimous action of the whole Frankish nobility against the church utterly impossible.

4. These national antipathies were perhaps most strongly developed among the Austrasians, who, disliking to be governed by the same sovereign as the Neustrians, obliged Lothaire II., in 622, to give them his own son Dagobert I., then a youth of sixteen years, as their separate king. Lothaire II., whose reign is not memorable for anything except the above-mentioned constitution, died in 628, leaving the whole Frankish monarchy in the hands of Dagobert I., whose reign, extending to 638, forms one of the most brilliant periods of Frankish history, and gave to the Frankish name a great preponderance in the affairs of western Europe. He successfully defended the frontiers of his empire, and in the administration of the interior was supported by able ministers, such as Pepin, major domus of Austrasia, Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne, and Arnulf, Bishop of Metz. He himself traversed Austrasia and Burgundy, listening attentively to any complaints that were brought before him, and restraining the abuses and violence of the nobles. He further exerted himself to amend the laws of his various subjects, encouraged commerce and industry, and made his name illustrious all over Europe. But after his death, the Merovingian

dynasty sank into a state of weakness and imbecility which ultimately proved fatal to it.

5. About this time the institution of the *major domus regiae*, or mayor of the palace, acquired a power which virtually raised it above that of the king. The time when the office was first instituted is uncertain, but originally the holder of it had simply been an officer of the king's household, through whom petitions and representations were brought before the sovereign. By his living constantly near the person of the king, and by his influence upon those of the king's actions which affected his subjects and their most delicate private affairs, the major domus soon acquired an importance which was felt not only in the palace but throughout the monarchy; and, although his power was not clearly defined, he gradually came to be regarded as the legitimate representative of the king in all his functions. The right of appointing the major domus had originally belonged to the king, but during the period of the civil wars a change took place, for the more the power of the king depended upon the goodwill of his nobles, the more the latter strove to secure their own interests. Thus it had become customary in the reign of Lothaire II. for the major domus to be appointed by a sort of election of the nobles, the king only sanctioning their choice. When there was only one king of the Franks, there should, of course, have been only one major domus; but as the aristocracies of the three divisions of the kingdom assumed a somewhat hostile attitude towards one another, it became customary to have special mayors of the palace in Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy, who were to represent the interests of the respective aristocracies in the three countries. Each of these officers naturally strove to raise himself at the expense of his two colleagues, and this rivalry and jealousy among them enabled the king, for a time, to protect himself against their ambitious schemes by employing one against the others. But when Lothaire II. died, Pepin of Landen, who had been major domus

in Austrasia, also exercised the same functions in Neustria ; and on the death of Sigebert, Dagobert's successor, in 638, Pepin's son Grimoald attempted to raise his own son Childebert to the throne of Austrasia. But he paid for the rash attempt with his own and his son's life, and a Merovingian prince was allowed, at least nominally, to continue the government, a result owing partly to a traditional reverence for the royal house of Clovis, and partly to the jealousy of the nobles, who could not brook the idea of being governed by one of themselves. But while attempts of this kind were for a time made hopeless, the dispute as to which among the three mayors of the palace should be the first in rank, broke out with renewed vehemence, and was carried on in every imaginable way, though for the most part on the field of battle. For a time Neustria seemed to gain the upper hand. Ebroin, its major domus, governed the kingdom as an absolute ruler, gave the vacant throne to any member of the Merovingian family he pleased, and relying on his own party among the nobles, endeavoured to crush all his enemies by force, and, above all, treated the church in the most violent and shameless manner.

6. After Ebroin's death in 687, the importance and authority of the Austrasian major domus naturally increased, and as Pepin of Heristal (an estate near Liege), a nephew of Pepin of Landen, was then invested with the office, and understood his real position, he aimed at the exclusive possession of the office, and was supported in his attempts by the Austrasian nobles and by the aversion of the Neustrians to Berthar, the successor of Ebroin. The battle of Testry, in 687, decided the question, and the whole of the Frankish monarchy again had one ruler and master in the person of Pepin, while the nominal sovereignty was left to the Neustro-Burgundian Theodoric III., whom Pepin, after the victory over Berthar, also raised to the throne of Austrasia. Pepin, however, soon found it advisable again to give to each of the two other divisions of the kingdom its own major

domus, but left the sovereignty of the entire kingdom to the one king Theodoric. Pepin knew that, though he was on all occasions supported by the church, he would be unable, in opposition to the ambitious aristocracies, to concentrate all power in his own person. However, in dividing the powers of the mayoralty, he removed the disadvantages of the measure by retaining Austrasia for himself, while he gave Neustria to his son Grimoald, and Burgundy to another son of the name of Drogo. By this means the hereditary character of the office was initiated : Pepin remained in the undisturbed possession of his power until his death in 714, although the aristocracies of Neustria and Burgundy became more and more rebellious under the yoke of the new rulers.

Under these circumstances, Pepin could scarcely hope to restore the power and influence to the Frankish empire which it had once possessed. Instead of acquiring additional territories and acting on the offensive, the Franks had for some time been obliged to confine themselves to a defensive attitude, and had sustained some serious losses. During the latter half of the sixth century, the eastern frontier of the Frankish empire was attacked by the Avars, and Austrasia was for a time tributary to them. Towards the end of the same century, however, the advancement of the Slavonians westward delivered the Franks from this danger ; but the Slavonians, who at first seemed to have settled as friends on their eastern frontiers, soon proved to be no less dangerous enemies than the Avars had been before, and pressing forward into the heart of Germany, conquered the territories between the upper course of the Elbe, the Saale, and the upper Maine. The Slavonian empire, which had been founded by a Frankish merchant of the name of Samo, in 629, soon fell into decay, but the Frankish frontier still continued to be endangered. On the Italian side, all the conquests made in former times had fallen into the hands of the Lombards, against whom the Franks had great difficulty in defending even the Alpine passes. The

Saxons, who had recognised the protectorate of the Franks after the subjugation of the Thuringians, endeavoured indeed soon after to recover their independence, but were kept down by King Lothaire I. After his time, however, they became quite free, and availed themselves of their liberty by indulging in incessant petty warfare against the adjoining Frankish territories. The result of this was, that within a short period all the Frankish possessions on the right bank of the Rhine, as far as the mouth of the Sieg in the neighbourhood of Bonn, were lost. About the same time Bavaria also recovered its independence, and that without any armed attempt to shake off the yoke of the Franks; for the close connexion between the Lombards and the dukes of Bavaria rendered the supremacy of the Frankish kings over the latter country little more than nominal. In Alemannia, affairs were no better, for the dukes of that country cared little for the orders of the Frankish kings, and their dependence was acknowledged at most by occasional polite assurances, and by presents and embassies being sent to the court. In the south-west of Gaul itself, the greater part of Aquitaine had constituted, ever since the year 687, a separate dukedom, under a Merovingian prince Eudo, and claimed to be quite independent of the rest. The Aquitanians had, from very ancient times, maintained a certain independence, in consequence of their peculiar nationality. The conquering Franks who had established themselves among them were very few, and had become amalgamated with the natives much more completely than elsewhere, so that there existed among them no feeling of union with the rest of the Franks, and the dukes of Aquitaine found it comparatively easy to maintain their independence. Brittany, which had from the first been but loosely connected with Neustria, pursued a similar course; and, lastly, the north-western part of the empire, which was inhabited by the Frisians, likewise asserted its independence, being backed by the Saxons, and protected by the sea and the mouths of the Meuse and the Rhine.

Such was the condition of the Frankish monarchy during the administration of Pepin of Heristal, who resided at Cologne, and governed Austrasia as a sovereign ruler. He tried every means, both peaceful and warlike, to restore the ancient frontiers of the kingdom ; but although his arms were successful in most of the above-mentioned countries, he was unable to effect more than a nominal recognition of the Frankish supremacy. The only real advantage gained by his efforts was, that the Franks were roused from their sorry defensive to an offensive attitude, and were inspired with the idea, that what had been lost must sooner or later be recovered.

7. When, in 714, Pepin died, the task he had set himself was only half completed, for the condition of the monarchy, both internally and externally, was far from satisfactory. Even during his lifetime, his son Grimoald, whom he had intended to be his successor in the office of major domus, had been murdered by enemies of his family. Pepin then fixed upon Theodewald, Grimoald's son, who was only six years old, as his successor, and Plectrudis, the boy's mother, was to act in his name during his minority. This arrangement was submitted to by the nobles in silence ; but no sooner had Pepin closed his eyes, than it met with opposition in every part of the kingdom, more especially in Neustria, for the Austrasians, though opposed to Plectrudis, were favourable to the scheme which secured the highest dignity to the Austrasian family of Pepin. They accordingly fixed their eyes upon Charles, a natural son of Pepin, as a suitable successor to his father. This favour of his countrymen drew upon him the hatred and persecution of Plectrudis, and for a time he was imprisoned at Cologne. But he made his escape, quickly organized his followers, and having first humbled his enemies within his own family, he attacked the Neustrians. At first he was unsuccessful, but in 717 he defeated them in the great battle of Vincy, near Cambrai, and pursued the vanquished up to the walls of Paris, where they were almost anni-

hiliated. The Neustrians had been leagued with the Aquitanians, and their duke Eudo was forced, in 718, to deliver up to Charles the Neustrian king Chilperic II. and his treasures. In 720, Charles, surnamed Martel (the Hammer), was major domus of the whole kingdom of the Franks. Following the example of his father, he regarded it as his first duty to restore the ancient frontiers of the kingdom, and, above all, to reduce the revolted nations of Germany to obedience. But before he could accomplish his object in that quarter, a new danger threatened the kingdom from the south-west. The Arabs, after subduing a great portion of Spain, had crossed the Pyrenees and conquered Narbonne; in 732 they invaded Aquitaine, took Bordeaux, and marched upon Tours, the wealthy abbey of which city attracted their cupidity. This invasion threatened to plant the banner of Mahomedanism in all parts of southern Europe; and the fact that these new enemies were regarded as invincible, filled all Christendom with terror and consternation. Charles Martel was invoked by Eudo of Aquitaine to come to his rescue; and relying on the attachment of the Austrasians and the despair of the Neustrians, he rapidly marched against the Mahomedans. In the plain between Tours and Poitiers, he utterly defeated the army of the infidels in a great battle, in which 300,000 of them are said to have been slain: the survivors returned across the Pyrenees. This battle, which was fought in 732, is one of the few that have exercised a decisive influence upon the destinies of Europe; for had the Arabs been victorious, Europe might have become a Mahomedan instead of a Christian country. After a few years the Arabs indeed returned, but their numerical strength was destroyed, and the prestige of their name had been broken for ever in the neighbourhood of Poitiers. The glory of Charles Martel was immense; he was everywhere looked up to as the great saviour of Christendom, and the glorious achievement gave to his name a lustre and a weight which were of the greatest advantage to him in his subsequent career.

When Gaul was freed from this danger, Charles Martel again turned his attention mainly to the subjugation of the German nations. This undertaking was crowned with more success than those of his father, for the Bavarians, Saxons, and Frisians, returned to their allegiance, though the terms on which they submitted were of a very liberal nature. While he conquered the Germans by force of arms, he also supported the missions of the Catholic church among them, and thus paved the way for the peaceful conquests of Christianity. Beyond this Charles did little to promote the schemes of the church, for his whole life was devoted to another great object, the restoration of the Frankish dominion. Pope Gregory III. being hard pressed by the Lombards, and forsaken by the emperor of the East, despatched ambassadors to Charles, sending him the keys of the tomb of St. Peter, with other presents, and the title of consul and patricius, and implored him to come to his rescue. But Charles had too much to do in his own dominions to venture upon such an undertaking, for every thing had fallen into such a state of disorganization, that it required the utmost caution and circumspection to keep the monarchy together. He was indeed strongly supported by the Austrasian aristocracy and the high dignitaries of the church, but he had to purchase this support by allowing the lawless and insolent nobles to act towards the other classes of his subjects in any way they chose, while he was obliged to exercise all his influence to introduce into the vacant places in the church such men as were attached to himself, without any regard to their talent or capacity. By such a policy both the clergy and the nobles were reduced to a state of brutal barbarism, which it would be painful to describe in detail. Amid the general lawlessness, Charles down to the end of his career trampled down every open opponent, and this was all he aimed at.

8. When Charles Martel died in 741, the office of major

domus, like a legitimate inheritance, was divided between his two sons, Carloman, and Pepin surnamed Le Bref (the Short), the former obtaining the eastern and the latter the western half of the kingdom. Insurrections, as was not uncommon after a change of rulers, broke out in every part of the kingdom; but Charles Martel had made his arrangements so admirably, that his sons without much difficulty were enabled soon to reduce the rebellious spirits to submission and obedience. One of their most formidable opponents was their step-brother Gripho, who had at first been excluded from his share in the office, but had been admitted on his father's deathbed. When he claimed his share in the mayoralty, he was hunted by his brothers from country to country, until at the end of ten years he perished among the Lombards. After a period of six years, Carloman having become tired of his position, followed the example of many princes and nobles of the time, by withdrawing from public life first into the monastery of Mount Soracte, near Rome, and afterwards to that of Monte Casino in the Apennines. Not much later Pepin, it is not exactly known in what manner, became major domus for the entire kingdom. His policy was on the whole the same as that of his father, but at the same time he aimed at improving the moral foundations of the state, and strengthening it by means which had been hitherto overlooked. He found a most valuable assistant for this great work in the person of the Anglo-Saxon Winfred, commonly called Bonifacius, the apostle of the Germans.

The Anglo-Saxon church had from the first been distinguished for its devoted attachment to Rome and the Papal See, and had always displayed the greatest activity through its missionaries among the heathen nations on the continent of Europe. Anglo-Saxon missionaries had been making efforts ever since the middle of the sixth century on the coasts of Germany, especially among the Frisians and Saxons, not to men-

tion St. Columba, an Irishman, who with twelve companions preached the gospel among the Alemannians, and St. Kilian, who died the death of a martyr at Würzburg in 689. But their success was not equal to their zeal. Winfred acted in a more practical spirit : his first object was completely to convert the inhabitants of middle and southern Germany, who had long been Christians, but in name rather than in reality. According to the common custom of the time, he first obtained the sanction of the Pope to his undertaking, and letters of recommendation to persons of rank and power in those countries. Charles Martel, to whom Winfred was thus recommended, at once perceived the great advantages which might accrue to his dominions if all his subjects could be induced to acknowledge one church, and accordingly gave the missionary every support and encouragement. Winfred commenced his operations in 718, and five years later, during a second visit to Rome, Pope Gregory II. consecrated him bishop of all the newly-converted countries, and of those he might yet convert. Winfred's activity extended even to those countries which the protection of the major domus could not reach. With the aid of Duke Odilo, he succeeded in reanimating the seeds of Christianity in Bavaria, which had been sown there long before, but had remained inert. He organized the church of the country, divided it into bishoprics, filled the sees with men devoted to himself and the papal authority, and exerted himself in every way to make the clergy perform their duties towards the people. After this he established four bishoprics in the central parts of Germany, where, in the meantime, the work of conversion had been zealously continued by his friends and disciples. All these efforts were crowned, in 745, by his elevation to the archbishopric of Mayence, which, though situated in Gaul, now became the metropolitan see for all the newly-founded bishoprics in Germany. But his great work was not complete so long as Gaul itself was distracted by religious discord. The majority of the people in the latter

country were indeed attached to the Catholic faith, but Arianism still flourished in many parts, and the German tribes in the north were, generally speaking, still pagans. The desirableness of remedying this state of things had been felt by Charles Martel; and Pepin being animated by the same spirit, immediately after his accession entered into negotiations with the great missionary, who now undertook the task of reforming an ancient Christian country and of restoring the unity of a church, which had flourished centuries before the gospel was known among his own countrymen. Winfred entered upon his task with the same vigour and energy he had displayed in Germany. Everywhere he filled the high places in the church with men of ability and devoted to his plans, and restored the organization of the church, which had fallen into decay and anarchy. In 743, a council was held at Septines, near Charleroi in Belgium, the object of which was to reform the morals of the clergy: they were forbidden to indulge in the chase, and ordered to submit to their diocesan bishop, with the obligation of rendering him annually an account of their faith and their ministry. In the following year another council at Soissons passed measures of a similar tendency. Winfred's main object in Gaul, as elsewhere, was to connect the church as closely as possible with the See of Rome, and to make her regard the Bishop of Rome as the primate, a light in which, at an earlier period, Pope Leo the Great had been viewed by the church of Gaul; but since that time the papal supremacy had lost all its power and meaning, and was little better than a name. Through Winfred's reforms the clergy of France entered into a relation of strict obedience to Rome, which in all essential points was the same as that established in the Anglo-Saxon church.

All these reforms, which were fiercely opposed by the great mass of the corrupt clergy and their friends among the laity, could not be effected without the most powerful aid from the secular arm. Pepin saw that, if the work was to be lasting,

a new power had to be created in the state ; for neither the old church in its decay, nor the aristocracy, afforded him any effective support. The reformed church, therefore, had to make certain concessions to its new protector, and to make over to him portions of its worldly possessions, with which he rewarded his adherents among the nobles. These concessions, however, were made very reluctantly, and not without reservations, though the idea of making the church independent of the state at that time never occurred even to her staunchest champions.

Even Charles Martel seems to have entertained the idea of creating a new class of subjects as a counterpoise to the haughty and independent aristocracy, who regarded the major domus only as the first among their equals, but refused to acknowledge him as their master. As the power of the aristocracy was based upon their landed property, the new order likewise required a similar basis of power and influence ; and as the major domus was unwilling to diminish his own territorial possessions, the property of the church was seized upon for the purpose, and the confusion and anarchy prevailing in the church during the administration of Charles Martel, and even during the first period of that of Pepin, facilitated this wholesale spoliation. There was indeed no want of promises of a future restitution, but the reformed church, however reluctantly, was obliged to submit to what had become a necessity.

How little the church of that age was disposed to magnify secondary points and treat them as vital questions, became still more evident in the revolution which transferred the crown of the kingdom from the Merovingian dynasty to the family of Pepin. Ever since the time of Dagobert, the mayors of the palace of the family of Pepin had governed the empire in the name of the kings of the Merovingian house, who occupied the throne only by sufferance, and enjoyed neither the respect nor

the affections of their subjects. They lived like eastern sultans in coarse luxuries and voluptuousness, in which they seem to have been confirmed by the mayors of the palace, who thus hoped the more effectually to retain in their own hands the real power of sovereigns. The contemptible kings of the Merovingian dynasty are deservedly designated by French historians as *Rois fainéants*, or good-for-nothings. From the year 737 to 742, the major domus did not even think it necessary to fill the vacant throne, but acted himself as the lawful sovereign ; in the latter year Childeric III. was made nominal king, but was not allowed to hold the sceptre for more than ten years. Pepin, who had done so much to increase and strengthen the papal authority in the Frankish monarchy, might with tolerable certainty calculate on the Pope's support in any case in which he needed it. Pepin accordingly, perhaps on the suggestion of the Pope Zacharia himself, addressed a letter to him, asking him whether he, who possessed the power and performed the functions, should not also bear the title of king. The answer was favourable, and Pepin, who had previously obtained the consent of the clergy and nobility to his scheme of usurpation, was raised in the Frankish fashion on a shield, and proclaimed king of the Franks in 752. Winfred anointed him, and as Pepin had the papal sanction, he styled himself king by the grace of God (*Dei gratia*), a title which was retained by all his successors, and also adopted by the monarchs of other countries, when they were crowned or anointed by a dignitary of the church. This title was not without considerable importance, for while the Merovingians had reigned merely by the right of conquest, Pepin, assuming the sovereignty in the name of God, imparted to it a new and nobler significance, implying great duties as well as great rights. The imbecile Childeric III. was deposed at Soissons, stripped of his fair locks, and sent into a convent where he spent the remainder of his days.

The dynasty which thus ascended the Frankish throne is

commonly known under the name of the Carlovingians ; they commenced their career under the most favourable auspices, being supported on all sides by strong powers, the authority of the Pope and the influence of the clergy. The revolution thus quietly effected was one of the most important in the history of Europe, especially in regard to the papal power and the destiny of France. Pepin reigned from 752 till 768, and it appears that he had promised the Pope, in return for his services, to assist him against the Lombards. The very year after his accession, Pepin was reminded of his promise by Stephen II. the successor of Zacharia, who had fled across the Alps, and appeared in person before the Frankish monarch. The Pope to secure his object anointed Pepin a second time, and also his sons Charles and Carloman, and commanded the nobles, under penalty of excommunication, never to take their kings from any other than the Carlovingian family. Stephen further conferred upon the king the title of Roman patricius, which he probably did in the name of the Emperor of Constantinople, his own sovereign, for the Pope had no power to grant such a distinction. In return for these honours Pepin made two expeditions into Italy, during which he delivered the Pope from the Lombards, who, under their king Astolphus, were seriously threatening Rome. They were compelled not only to indemnify the Roman church for all the losses she had sustained, and give up their conquests, but had to surrender some important districts, which had been conquered long before, such as the Pentapolis and the exarchate of Ravenna. The lands thus restored to the church, it must be understood, were only ecclesiastical property, and were not of such a nature as to constitute a State of the Church in our sense of the term ; for the proud city of Rome, refusing to obey any one but an emperor, still continued nominally to be subject to the Emperor of the East down to the year 800, when Charlemagne revived the title of Emperor of the West. Pepin henceforth exercised the protectorate of the

church of Rome. Copronymus, the Emperor of the East, sent ambassadors to him, who brought him the first organs, until then unknown in Gaul, and asked for the hand of his daughter Gisela, promising the exarchate of Ravenna as her dowry, but Pepin refused these offers, though he contrived to maintain friendly relations with the eastern court.

After the successful termination of the war against the Lombards, Pepin devoted himself during the remainder of his life to the improvement of the internal organization of his kingdom, and to the restoration of its ancient boundaries. Winfred, his most sagacious and powerful supporter in the administration of the state, had died the death of a martyr, in 755, among the Frisians ; for after having settled the ecclesiastical affairs of the Frankish kingdom, he had left his archbishopric of Mayence, and returned to the country of the Frisians to complete there what he had commenced in his youth. But the number of his disciples and followers in the Frankish kingdom was so great, that Pepin had no difficulty in pursuing the same policy as if Winfred had been alive. As regards his foreign wars, Pepin gained several decisive advantages over the Saxons, and compelled them again to recognise the supremacy of the Franks. The conquest of Aquitaine, which was defended with indomitable courage by Waifre, was not completed until the year 768, when Waifre was assassinated. He is said to have driven the Arabs across the Pyrenees, and thereby to have recovered the province of Septimania. In Bavaria, he availed himself of the minority of Duke Tassilo, for reducing him and all the nobles of the country to the condition of vassals. It is, indeed, certain that Pepin increased his military forces as a necessary support for his dynasty, but it is uncertain in what manner this object was accomplished, some maintaining that it was effected by secularizing a large amount of church property and dividing it among those who increased his armies with their numerous followers, while others assert that he only employed greater

strictness in compelling all free men, both Franks and Romanized Gauls, to perform military service.

The new dynasty continued the ancient German practice of dividing the kingdom among the several princes ; but Pepin disregarding the different nationalities which had usually formed the basis of the division, divided his kingdom into a northern and a southern portion by means of a line running from east to west. The southern part was given to Carloman, and the northern to Charles, afterwards Charlemagne or Charles the Great. The two brothers reigned together from 768 to 771, when, in consequence of disputes between them, Charles obtained the sole sovereignty.

CHAPTER IV.

ORIGIN AND EXTENSION OF MOHAMEDANISM UNTIL THE DIVISION OF THE CALIPHATE.

1. Arabia and the Arabs ; 2. Mahomed ; 3. The first Caliphs, and the conquest of Syria, Persia, and Egypt ; 4. Caliphate of Othman and Ali ; 5. Caliphate of the dynasties of the Ommyyades and Abbasides.

1. THE vast peninsula of Arabia, between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, had never been completely conquered in ancient times, although attempts had been made by the Persians and afterwards by the Romans ; and down to the end of the sixth century of the Christian era, the tribes inhabiting it had not exercised any considerable influence upon the affairs of either the eastern or the western half of the Roman empire. Many centuries had passed without producing any changes upon them, and without leading them far onward in the course of civilisation. The genuine Arabs, who regarded Ismael, the outcast son of Abraham, as their common ancestor, and as the founder of the holy temple (the Caaba) at Mecca, were a

branch of the great Semitic race, and inhabited the interior of the peninsula or the great desert of Arabia, which from the remotest times had remained unchanged by the cultivating influences of man. But the sea margins in the west, south, and east have at all times formed a fertile band surrounding the table-land of the desert, and tempted their inhabitants to keep up an active intercourse with the rest of the world ; these maritime districts have always maintained their celebrity as countries of a most luxuriant vegetation, and as abounding in all kinds of spices and costly perfumes. Their inhabitants were renowned, not only as industrious tillers of the soil, but as skilful manufacturers : they made the finest and most delicate textures, and the most exquisite and costly articles of ornament. Nay, it would seem that the East generally owed the reputation of its inexhaustible wealth in natural products and of its astonishing industry, mainly to the coast countries of Arabia. But their inhabitants, though generally belonging to the same race as the tribes of the interior, were nevertheless regarded by the latter as a degenerate or inferior people, merely because they maintained an active intercourse with other nations, and because by cultivating the soil and profiting by its rich produce they had in several important points departed from the primitive simplicity of the Arabs of the interior. An implacable hatred had thus gradually arisen between the inhabitants of the coast who lived in towns and cities, and the nomadic tribes of the desert ; but necessity and ancient habit nevertheless kept up a peaceful intercourse between them, for the inhabitants of the coast were dependent on those of the interior for the exportation of their products, the main routes of their commerce running through the desert towards the north and north-west ; and the tribes of the interior derived great advantages from this commerce, their other occupations as nomades and warriors not being always sufficient to support their lives.

The nature of the country of the interior, with its scanty vegetation, rendered it impossible for large numbers of men to live together, who accordingly were thinly scattered over immense tracts of country ; and it was only around a few springs surrounded by oases that small sections of the people could group themselves with their flocks and herds on which their existence mainly depended. Every group or tribe of this kind was naturally at a considerable distance from others, and each being thus confined to itself preserved and represented in its seclusion the type of the whole nation, for everywhere the conditions of nature were the same, and could not but produce the same results. But while their mode of life at all times presented a kind of uniformity and stagnation, yet the Arabs externally displayed a most extraordinary degree of activity or rather restlessness. In order to find food for their cattle, they had to wander from place to place, and the feeling of home or the attachment to the spot of their birth had not the same charm for them as with other nations, although they looked upon their country as a whole with pride and affection. Hence their innate love for distant and adventurous wanderings, either to escort the caravans of merchants through the desert, or to attack the peaceful inhabitants of more fertile countries and even other nomadic tribes. It is true that such predatory expeditions were to them a necessary means of gaining their subsistence ; but it was at the same time their natural inclination to roam about, rather than necessity, that often led the Arabs far beyond the boundaries of their own country.

The life of each individual tribe was in general equally uniform as a whole, and equally varied in regard to the persons of whom it was composed. The simple tents, with their simple and scanty furniture, were easily transported by the camels from place to place, and were pitched again in their ancient order on a new spot selected for a temporary settlement, the tent of the chief being surrounded by those of the other mem-

bers of the tribe, who regarded him as connected with them by ties of relationship, though infinitely remote in degree. To this relationship the Arab tribes clung with incredible tenacity, and presented the purest type of a patriarchal community, such as had existed in the time of Abraham. The rights and duties of the chief, as well as of his tribe, were hallowed by ancient custom and usage, which prevented the chief becoming a despot, and his subjects slaves. The former was at once the judge, the priest, and the military commander of his tribe—functions which, in a primitive state of society, do not require any extraordinary mental or moral qualities, though a chief falling below mediocrity could hardly have been able to maintain his position.

If any people could claim the highest praise for daring and valour, it was the tribes of Arabia ; but these qualities were displayed in the same barren and unproductive sphere as their whole life, for in spite of them they were incapable of making permanent conquests, or founding organized communities or states. What they valued most was the skill of coming upon an enemy by surprise, or the performance of a brilliant feat of daring, their chief motive generally being to avenge some real or imaginary wrong, or to make booty ; and as soon as these objects were accomplished, the Arabs, without attempting to produce any lasting effects, returned to the desert from which they had issued like a whirlwind. These national characteristics made them the perpetual terror of their neighbours, with whom they lived in a state of uninterrupted warfare. Hence the Byzantine empire had always to guard against them its frontiers in Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, but the losses sustained in those parts were never so great as to be followed by permanent consequences. The inhabitants of those frontier countries had, in the course of time, become accustomed to regard the inroads of the Arabs as an evil that could not be avoided, but was at the same time not connected with any very

great danger : no one thought it possible that the Arabian desert was destined to send forth its hosts to conquer more than half of the known world.

The intellectual condition of the Arabs fully corresponded with their mode of life. The general mental organization of the Semitic race manifested itself among them in all its primitive force, showing on the one hand a wild and glowing imagination, and on the other a strong propensity to cold and subtle abstractions. Both peculiarities were displayed partly in their poetry, which was greatly honoured and much cultivated, and partly in their religious views and notions. Their language, which was equally suited to both, had attained, especially in poetry, a perfection in point of form, which in many respects surpassed everything known among more highly civilized nations. The subjects of their poetry generally were the incidents in the life of an individual, or in the history of a tribe, such as an encounter with an enemy, a feat of revenge, cunning, or daring ; but the inner life of man, though within narrow limits, gave origin to a kind of lyric poetry, which element is often very prominent even in their productions of a more epic character. But no great heroic epic was ever produced by the Arabs. What characterizes them from the earliest down to the latest times is a fondness for teaching by parable and allegory, which sometimes assumes the form of poetry and sometimes of prose.

As regards the religion of the Arabs, their views were a singular mixture of ancient native traditions and foreign ideas, which had been introduced among them from abroad. The foundation of their creed consisted of the ancient monotheistic ideas of the Semites, and the equally national worship of the stars. Interwoven with these fundamental notions were a richly developed demonology, together with Jewish and Christian ideas. In the time of Constantine, Christianity had been preached in Arabia, but it was fiercely persecuted at the be-

ginning of the sixth century, in consequence of which the emperor Justin I. prevailed upon a Christian king of Abyssinia to protect the Christians in Arabia. The Abyssinians accordingly, about 525, invaded Yemen, the south-western part of Arabia, and established Christianity; the new religion maintained itself under the protection and dominion of the Abyssinians until the year 575, when a Persian army expelled its professors. But Christian ideas, however altered and deteriorated, still continued to linger among the people. Notwithstanding all this, however, and although all tribes recognised one supreme God under the name of Allah, a kind of pagan idolatry was common to all the Arabs; it had been introduced from abroad, first among the inhabitants of the coast, and had subsequently been propagated by them into the interior, so that in the time of Mahomed, the Caaba of Mecca is said to have contained no less than 360 idols, one of which represented the Virgin Mary with the infant Christ in her arms. All the religions of the surrounding countries thus met in Arabia as it were on a neutral ground, which was not prepared indeed for any one of them exclusively, but at the same time rejected none. The national mind had a decided tendency to religious speculation, but no true national religion had yet been found, and the ancient native religious views had been almost obliterated and thrown into oblivion by the importations from abroad. The idea of one God, however, was still the basis of religion in all parts of Arabia, and the Caaba at Mecca was the great seat of his worship, though Allah had to share his temple with a number of other minor divinities. The foundation of this temple to which the Arabs from all parts made pilgrimages, was assigned, as we have already mentioned, to a very remote period. About the year 440, Kussai, the chief of the family of the Koreishites, who were intrusted with the guardianship of the temple, rebuilt the Caaba and became the founder of the principal civil and religious institutions of the country. The city of Mecca, being in pos-

session of this temple, was in one sense the capital of all Arabia ; it must further be observed, that being situated between the desert and the coast country, and at the junction of the great commercial routes, its population consisted of the two hostile elements of the Arab nation ; its inhabitants, at least those belonging to the great family of the Hashemites, were popularly regarded as the noblest of all the Arabs ; and even the dwellers in the desert, though they generally despised those living in towns, admitted their high claims and honoured them as the hereditary guardians of the Caaba. Hence their influence extended over all parts of the country, and over the most distant tribes, for there was scarcely any Arab that had not seen some member of that illustrious family engaged in some solemn religious ceremony at Mecca. The inhabitants of the city being agriculturists, merchants, shepherds, and warriors, united within their community all the different occupations of the various sections of the Arab nation, and for this reason the city was a sort of miniature representation of the various phases of Arab life.

2. It was in the city of Mecca that Mahomed, the great reformer of the religion of his countrymen, was born in 571, a few months after the expulsion of the Abyssinian Christians from Yemen. He was destined not only to unite the discordant elements of his nation by a common faith, but to raise the Arabs to the rank of one of the most important nations in the history of man. He was the son of Abdallah, who belonged to the tribe of the Koreishites and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious in all Arabia. He lost his father at the age of two years, and his mother at the age of six, and being received into the house of a wealthy uncle, Abu Taleb, he accompanied him and another uncle on their mercantile expeditions, conducting and attending to their camels. From his infancy Mahomed was distinguished for all those virtues of both mind and body which were most valued among his countrymen ; and his travels

enabled him to make himself acquainted with the character of the nations bordering upon Arabia, as well as with that of the Arabs themselves. In his twenty-fifth year he entered the service of Cadijah, a rich and noble widow at Mecca, and conducted her business so ably and faithfully, that she rewarded him with her hand and fortune. Being henceforth relieved of all cares and anxieties, he was in a condition to devote himself to the speculations and meditations to which he had at all times shown an extraordinary propensity. He always evinced the most lively interest in religious questions and the religious affairs of foreign nations, more especially those of the Jews and Christians, which it could not be difficult for him to study, the Scriptures having long before his time been translated into Arabic. It is not unlikely that even at an early period he may have experienced a feeling of dissatisfaction with the worship of his countrymen at Mecca ; but in all the religions he had an opportunity of studying, he could not but meet with something which ill agreed with his own individual views ; and the more disconsolate and confused his mind became during his restless searching after what he found nowhere, and during his deep and intense meditations upon the profoundest mysteries of the human heart, the more his whole mental energy became absorbed by the one great idea of becoming the religious reformer of his nation. He withdrew almost entirely from the world, seeking the society only of wise and learned men, among whom Waraca, a Christian priest, is specially mentioned. His peculiar religious excitement soon gained the upper hand over his mental faculties to such a degree, that, with his eyes open, he completely moved in a world of dreams, which in his sleep made a still more vivid impression upon him. In such circumstances he could scarcely have existed for any length of time without falling into a state of utter insanity, had he not given vent to his views and feelings in unburdening his mind to others.

But notwithstanding all this, it appears that up to his fortieth

year he did not undertake anything of consequence. In 611, he communicated what he called his revelations to his most intimate friends, his wife Cadijah, his cousin Ali, his servant Zeid, and his friend Abu Beker, telling them that he had received from God through the angel Gabriel, revelations which were to constitute the book of books (Al Koran), and he designated his new religion as that of Islam, that is, of the entire surrender of man's will to God. He further declared, that it was not his object to set up a new religion, but to reform the existing one, and to restore to their original purity and complete the revelations previously made through Abraham, Moses, and Christ. The keystone to the new edifice was, that there was only one God, and that Mahomed was his (last) prophet. The small circle of friends to whom he communicated these things, received them in a believing spirit, and soon gained other proselytes among their friends. The most enthusiastic among his adherents was Ali, who at once acknowledged Mahomed as a messenger from God, and with the fiery passion of an Arab declared himself ready to tear to pieces any one daring to oppose the prophet. Mahomed's uncle Abu Taleb trembled for his nephew, and implored him to desist from his undertaking; but Mahomed declared, that if any one were to present himself to him with the sun in one hand and the moon in the other, he would not shrink from his work.

When after a time he attempted to make known his views to the wider circle of the Koreishites, his own tribesmen, he was met with scorn and contempt, and as he continued to proclaim his doctrines with unabated zeal, pronouncing terrible curses upon the heads of the idolaters and profanators of the holy Caaba, the passion of his opponents was roused to such a degree, that on the 16th of July 622, he was obliged to flee from Mecca and seek shelter in the city of Medina, where he had already formed some influential connexions. This was the most important event in the life of the prophet, and its conse-

quences were so vast that his followers justly begin their era with the year of his flight. The era itself is called that of the Hegira, that is, of the flight.

The inhabitants of Medina, who in their occupations as well as in their mental culture resembled those of Mecca, were almost always at open or secret war with them, whence Mahomed, the enemy of their enemies, was highly welcome to them. The impression which his personal appearance and his glowing eloquence made upon them, far surpassed the expectations which his friends had excited. He came among them no longer as a dreamy visionary, such as the people of Mecca had known him to have been for many years, but as an injured man, in whose heart the ardour of innate pride and the consciousness of being the favoured minister of the Lord of Heaven, were concentrated in the one great desire of vengeance on his own and his God's enemies. Such a state of mind was perfectly understood by all the Arabs, even independently of their belief in his being a prophet. When, therefore, he began his war of revenge against Mecca, his heroism and his revelations, which were now given forth more copiously than ever, excited the minds of his new friends almost to frenzy. In 624, he sallied forth from Medina with a band of three hundred and fourteen followers to attack a caravan from Mecca. He was met by one thousand Koreishites, but nevertheless gained the victory and thus strengthened the belief in his divine mission. Some time afterwards, however, he was worsted, and the war thenceforth assumed a more atrocious character. He also turned his arms against some Jewish tribes in the neighbourhood whom he wished to compel to join his party ; but united with the Koreishites, they besieged him, in 627, at Medina. He was successful, however, in repelling the besiegers, stirred up discord among them, and having concluded a truce with the Koreishites, marched against the Jews of Cheibar, whose power he destroyed in 628.

Almost from the moment of his arrival at Medina, Mahomed had ruled over the city and the surrounding territory with absolute authority. His power was not indeed based upon any traditional or hereditary right, nor did it occur to him to displace the hereditary chiefs of his followers, but it was nevertheless secure through the ever active influence of his personal character, which was exercised in all directions: for being the military leader of his followers, and revered by them as the inspired prophet, he was enabled to control the enthusiastic multitude in a very different way from an ordinary ruler, and to create a devotion to his own objects which no legitimate Arab chief could have excited. Wherever a difficulty occurred, and whenever doubts or misconceptions arose among his followers, Mahomed was ready with an instantaneous explanation or decision, which he generally communicated orally to the assembled multitude of his followers. In this manner his doctrines acquired an extraordinary influence upon all the affairs of life. Every one who had adopted the few dogmas set forth by the prophet concerning God, at the same time committed his whole being to all the consequences flowing from them. All this was immensely facilitated by the fact that Mahomed demanded of his followers nothing but what was already known and familiar to them from their ancient national traditions, and was fully in accordance with their mode of thinking, feeling, and living.

During the truce with the Koreishites in 629, Mahomed undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca and made numerous converts; but in the following year, the truce having been violated, he returned to the city with an army of 10,000 men, and destroyed all the idols of the Caaba, saying: "Truth has arrived; let falsehood disappear." Whoever refused to submit unconditionally to him, or to acknowledge his divine mission with all its practical and logical consequences, had no choice left but between death and exile. The stupendous success of his enterprise and the fanatical zeal of his followers, operating like

an epidemic fever, induced most of his former opponents at Mecca to acknowledge themselves overpowered and convinced. Having thus put himself in possession of Mecca, he had no great difficulty in subduing the other parts of Arabia, partly by persuasion and partly by force of arms, though it must be admitted that many of the tribes gave in their adhesion, not because they were convinced of the divine nature of his doctrines, but because they heard him spoken of as a mighty chief who promised to Arabia a brilliant future, in which all were invited to participate. The conquest of Arabia alone, however, does not appear to have satisfied his ambition, for he entered into communications with the rulers of the great neighbouring empires, such as Chosroes, King of Persia, and Heraclius, the Emperor of Constantinople, calling upon them to adopt the new religion of Islam. Heraclius received the embassy with politeness, but firmly refused to accede to the request.¹ Mahomed's envoy, on his return through Syria, was murdered, and this gave rise to a war which was indeed of short duration, but was conducted by the Mahomedans or Moslems with fanatical fury. During this war the prophet conquered the country from the Euphrates to Ailah at the head of the Red Sea, but granted to his new Christian subjects perfect freedom to worship God in their own way. Shortly after this he was seized with a fatal illness at Medina, and died on the 7th, or perhaps more correctly, on the 8th of June 632. Some writers suppose that he died of poison. His wife Cadijah survived him, and he left one daughter of the name of Fatima, who afterwards became the wife of Ali.

The time when Mahomed was regarded as a mere pretender and impostor has now passed away, and passion and party spirit have given way to sounder historical views. We know that Mahomed was a man of an extremely delicate and nervous temperament, subject to excessive depression of spirits and

¹ See p. 91.

even to fits of epilepsy ; and that such a person should at times imagine himself to have visions and receive revelations from heaven, is not in any way surprising. We may therefore call his pretensions mere hallucinations and delusions, but an impostor he certainly was not : he was thoroughly in earnest in the work he had undertaken. The history of his life has been mixed up by contemporary as well as by later writers with a mass of fictions and absurd stories, invented either to prove his divine mission or to refute it, but true history must reject them as excrescences that have sprung from the superstitious reverence of his followers, or from the love of detraction on the part of his enemies.

The doctrines of Mahomed are incorporated in the Koran, which consists of a vast number of verses that had fallen from the mouth of the prophet at various times and on various occasions. The first edition was compiled by the order of his successor, Abu Beker, and a second at a somewhat later time, by command of the Caliph Othman. The incoherence and numerous contradictions it contains, plainly indicate the mode of its formation, and are at the same time evidences of its genuineness. The whole consists of one hundred and fourteen chapters or suras, which are divided into verses. Its chief doctrines are : 1. The necessity of absolute submission to the will of one God, whose prophet is Mahomed ; 2. the necessity of praying five times every day with the face turned towards Mecca. The hours of prayer were proclaimed at first from the pulpit, but afterwards from the minaret of the mosque ; 3. the necessity of giving alms to the poor ; 4. the necessity of fasting, especially throughout the month of Ramadhan, during which God was believed to have made his principal revelations to Mahomed ; and, 5. the necessity for every man of making at least one pilgrimage to the Caaba at Mecca. Mahomed allowed polygamy to continue among his followers, though he limited the number of legitimate wives to four, and even treated it as

meritorious to have only one wife ; he forbade the use of wine and of all intoxicating drinks, and the faithful were not allowed to eat pork ; gambling, music, and the use of images in places of worship, were likewise forbidden. Friday was appointed in every week as the day for public prayers, but the Moslem were not obliged to abstain from work on that day. The rite of circumcision and the custom of offering up animal sacrifices were retained ; but it is remarkable that Mahomed did not institute priests as a distinct class. The rewards awaiting the faithful in a future life are pictured by the prophet in the most glowing colours his imagination could supply ; and in order to obtain them, the faithful are neither to dread pains nor tortures in this world, if the unalterable decrees of God have so ordained it, and the greater the sacrifices the greater will be the rewards, especially if the sacrifices are made in the defence of the true faith, or in the contest against the enemies of God and his prophet.

This armed contest against the enemies of the new faith gradually came to be regarded as one of the most essential duties of his followers, and the readiness to engage in it was considered to be the surest test of a true believer. At first it was thought incumbent on the converts to engage only in a defensive war against enemies and opponents ; but Mahomed himself, towards the end of his life, preached the necessity of never ceasing aggressive war until the whole world should bow before God and the prophet. In regard to all foreign religions, however, he made this distinction, that while the object of the war should be the destruction of every species of paganism, Judaism and Christianity should be tolerated, if their confessors chose to adhere to their imperfect revelations and refuse to accept his purified doctrines. In return for this toleration, Jews and Christians were to pay a poll-tax for the protection of their lives and property ; they were further to mark their inferiority by paying tribute, in addition to which they were

obliged, at a subsequent period, to wear certain outward signs, which distinguished them even at a distance from the true believers. Nothing was so thoroughly congenial to the character and feelings of the Arabs, as the command to wage a perpetual and holy war against the infidels. Their restless love of warlike adventure and their unbounded valour now had a legitimate object—the conquest of the whole world, and the additional assurance, if they should fall, of enjoyments in a future life which surpassed all human conception.

All the other commandments regulating the conduct of the faithful towards relatives, women, children, servants, neighbours, friends, enemies, poor, and strangers, contained nothing that was not already known to the Arabs by ancient custom as a sacred canon of ethics, and all that Mahomed did was to interweave them with the specific substance of his new doctrines. All the ceremonies and observances, lastly, which he prescribed, were either renewals of ancient customs, or of such a nature that the Arabs had no difficulty in complying with them, and all he desired was to introduce order and regularity in their observances, and that with a constant conviction of their doing the will of God.

A few years of such training sufficed to engraft the new doctrines so deeply on the external and inner life of his followers, that a tradition of a thousand years could not have been more firmly rooted. It is true, there still remained much for the prophet to do to keep his hosts in order and in motion, but the disturbances which called forth his personal interference, generally proceeded from newly converted persons, who had not yet become thoroughly imbued with his spirit, and they did not affect any of his leading doctrines, but mostly such points only as had not yet been definitely settled by the prophet himself. All those who were truly animated by the spirit of the new faith, were in such a condition that they were ready at any moment to sacrifice their lives for the truth they believed in.

The different tribes of Arabia, which had hitherto been kept asunder by ancient feuds and customs, now became united by their new faith, which, for the moment, made them forget all their previous petty animosities. In their new religion all the Arab tribes felt themselves as one nation selected by Heaven to fight for God and his prophet.

3. After the death of Mahomed, Ali, who had married the prophet's daughter Fatima, and was a man of profound religious enthusiasm, had the first claim to the succession ; but the circle of the prophet's personal friends appointed Abu Beker, Mahomed's father-in-law, Caliph, that is, successor in the office of leader at the public prayers. As the prophet had left no male heir, and immediately before his death had called Abu Beker his best friend, no one could complain of the appointment ; but it was, nevertheless, not acquiesced in without opposition. The task which Abu Beker had before him, was partly to continue the holy war against the infidels, and partly to collect the doctrines promulgated at various times by Mahomed into one canon. Ali disapproved of the plan of collecting the dogmas and making them an absolute code of laws, because he considered it to be injurious to mental freedom. But Abu Beker persevered in compiling the revelations of the prophet, some of which were already written on palm-leaves, leather, stones, and even bones, while others had been propagated only in the memory of his followers. Thus was produced the first edition of the Koran. As Abu Beker himself was already advanced in years, he left the command of the armies to eleven generals, who were employed partly in subduing the still rebellious portions of Arabia and thus endeavouring to give unity to the nation, and partly in making war upon the neighbouring countries of Syria and Persia. But before these conquests could be accomplished, Abu Beker died in 634. He, as well as the succeeding caliphs, was virtually the religious, military, and civil chief of the nation, his power being tempered only by the spirit of equality

of all men taught in the Koran, and by the simple forms of an almost republican government.

On his deathbed, Abu Beker appointed Omar his successor, who must be regarded as the real founder of the dominion of the Arabs, for, under him, Syria, Persia, and Egypt were conquered, and the whole of the new empire received its first political organization. His reign is the most brilliant period in the history of the caliphate.

In the reign of Abu Beker one army had been sent into Syria, and after taking Bosra, had advanced with irresistible force upon Damascus, the ancient capital of Syria. During the siege of this city a great battle was fought at Emesa, in which 70,000 men, sent by the Emperor Heraclius to protect Syria, were cut to pieces. Hereupon Damascus capitulated with one Arab chief, and while the negotiations were still going on, another entered the city at the head of his victorious host. This took place in the year 634. A second great battle, fought on the shores of the Lake of Tiberias in 635, completed the conquest of Syria. Omar himself entered Jerusalem without any pomp, riding on a camel, carrying before his saddle one sack filled with corn, and another with dates, together with a bottle of water, and offering a share in his frugal banquet to any one who stood in need of it. He stayed ten days in the holy city to regulate the affairs of the country, and ordered a mosque to be built there, although he allowed the Christians the free exercise of their religion. After this Aleppo and Antioch likewise surrendered, and Heraclius was obliged, in 638, for ever to renounce the possession of Syria. As the Arabs were now masters of Phoenicia and its ports, they were in a condition to establish a maritime power.

The conquest of Persia was accomplished a few years later, although the army sent by Abu Beker towards the Euphrates was from the first as successful as that which achieved the conquest of Syria. The Persian kingdom, under the dynasty

of the Sassanidae, had reached its greatest prosperity under Chosroes I. In his reign, which lasted from 531 to 579, the kingdom did not so much increase in extent as in internal prosperity, for he intrusted the administration of its provinces to governors or viziers, whose conduct was most strictly watched ; he improved the laws, the finances, and the military affairs of his kingdom ; he raised agriculture by supporting those engaged in tilling the soil, and by numerous canals constructed for the purpose of irrigation ; he invited learned Greeks to his court, founded schools of all kinds, and caused the most celebrated Greek and Indian authors to be translated into Persian. But after his death the kingdom fell into a state of rapid internal decay, and its army of 150,000 men, which, under his grandson Yezdegerd, was opposed to 30,000 Arabs, was overpowered, in 636, in the great battle of Cadesia, which lasted for three days, the Persians fighting with desperate obstinacy for the religion of Ormuzd. The famous standard of the Persians, a leathern apron of a blacksmith, who in ancient times was believed to have delivered Persia, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Having founded a colony at Bassora, which commands the trade and navigation of Persia, the Arabs hastened towards Ctesiphon, the wealthy capital of the Persian empire, which was taken and plundered. At length another great victory at Nehavend, in 642, completed the conquest of Persia. King Yezdegerd had invited the assistance even of the Chinese and Turks, the latter of whom then dwelt on the east of the Caspian ; but it was all of no avail : he was taken prisoner and assassinated on the banks of the Oxus in 651. The surviving adherents of the worship of light or fire, which was hated and persecuted by the Moslem more than any other, had to seek refuge in the most distant corners of what once was the Persian empire. The river Oxus was now made the eastern boundary of the Arab dominion, but at a subsequent period the Mahomedan conquerors planted their banners even on the banks of the Indus.

The expedition into Egypt, which was in reality only another attack upon the Byzantine empire, met with considerable support even in Egypt itself from the Coptic Christians, who being monophysites, entertained an implacable hatred against their Greek rulers and oppressors. In the course of two years, 639 and 640, the whole country was conquered, Alexandria alone offering a brave resistance and sustaining a siege of fifteen months. The celebrated library of that capital, founded by the first Ptolemies, is said to have been destroyed by fire by the order of Omar, who is reported to have consigned the books to the flames with these words : " If these writings agree with the Koran, they are useless ; if they disagree, they are pernicious and must be destroyed." This account, however, seems to be only an idle story, for the library had been severely injured during a conflagration in the time of Julius Cæsar, and all that remained of it had perished long before the time of Mahomed. The manner, moreover, in which Omar treated Egypt, renders it highly improbable that he should have been guilty of such an act of extreme barbarism. He took the greatest care in organizing the government of the country ; he placed the system of taxation upon a fair footing, and even set apart a third of the revenue for the purpose of keeping in repair the ancient canals and dikes ; he would also have restored the ancient canal connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, had he not been prevented by the fear of thereby opening to the infidels the road to the sacred cities of Arabia. The city of Cairo, that is, city of victory, arose about that time out of a camp of the Arab commander Amrou. From Egypt the conquest was carried westward along the northern coast of Africa ; and in 648 Tripolis fell into the hands of the Arabs.

Omar throughout his reign carried out the commands of the prophet most energetically, not only by vigorous and successful endeavours to compel all neighbouring nations to adopt the doctrines of Islam, but also in his internal administration, which

he conducted with the utmost care and vigilance, enforcing the ethical precepts of Mahomed partly by his own example, and partly by severely chastising those of the believers who dared to violate them. During his reign, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, the three most ancient seats of Christianity, were obliged to permit mosques to be erected within their walls, and to see the Christian faith tolerated only on humiliating terms. Everywhere the Christians and Jews embraced the new religion in great numbers. This may seem the more surprising, considering that the professors of both religions enjoyed full protection of life and property on the sole condition of their acknowledging the supremacy of the caliph. But the startling phenomenon is explained by the following considerations. The adoption of Mahomedanism held out to all proselytes great worldly advantages, for the prophet had expressly commanded his followers to conquer and take possession of the whole earth and its treasures. The state of Christianity in the eastern church was perfectly confounding and bewildering to ordinary minds, the church being divided into a number of opposing sects which hated one another with deadly hatred ; the best energies of the teachers of religion were spent in struggles and disputes about speculative matters, which were in themselves of little importance and unintelligible, or uninteresting to the great body of the people and to all those who found a more congenial sphere in action than in abstruse and subtle disputations. The learned or the government sometimes succeeded in rousing a considerable degree of enthusiasm or fanaticism in favour of one dogma or another, but when the unnatural excitement was over, the internal emptiness of the dispute and the disconsolate state of mind were felt all the more keenly. The religion of Mahomed, on the other hand, was a system of doctrines on the whole more congenial to Asiatic natures ; its dogmas, expressed in brief, simple, and sometimes sublime sentences, contain nothing that was not acceptable and intelligible to Asiatics of ordinary

understanding, who by adopting them at once got rid of all the subtle quibblings about the Christian doctrines. The success, moreover, which had hitherto attended the arms of the Moslem seemed to justify the word of the prophet, that his followers should enjoy their powers in this world as well as in the world to come, while Christianity, demanding self-denial in this world, referred its adherents to a future life for rewards and enjoyments. The subjects of the eastern empire, lastly, were so accustomed to submit unconditionally to the arbitrary dictates of their despotic rulers, whether affecting their material or spiritual wellbeing, that they never thought of refusing the same submission to their new governors, especially as they saw that no one was exempted from it, whereas the oppression under which they had hitherto lived had always enriched a numerous class of detested officials who sucked the very blood and marrow out of the people in every part of the eastern empire.

Under such circumstances, the subjects of the Greek empire cannot have had much difficulty in deciding which faith to embrace ; and the desertions from the ranks of the Christians would no doubt have been still more frequent, had it not been for the vast numbers of conquering Arabs who permanently established themselves in the newly acquired countries ; for these immigrating hordes regarded themselves as the genuine and favoured sons of the prophet, and as superior to the new converts who belonged to different nationalities. This national pride of the Arabs, heightened by their assumed religious superiority, made itself felt by all the new converts in a very painful manner, and thus formed the commencement of a division in the Moslem world, which led to a separation of the conquered nations from the Arabs. The exclusive spirit of the latter forced the former to maintain among themselves a close union, and this union protected their religion more securely than the toleration proclaimed by the Mahomedans.

4. Omar's career, which had been an uninterrupted series of

successes, was cut short, in 644, by a common Persian, who was determined to avenge the misfortunes of his country and mortally wounded the caliph in a mosque at Medina. According to his own regulation, a commission of six persons were to appoint his successor, and as Ali, Mahomed's son-in-law, had refused to submit to the first caliphs, the commission elected Othman, of the House of Ommiyah, and one of the richest men at Medina, as caliph. During his reign the foreign conquests were pursued with the same vigour, and on the same scale of grandeur as before. In northern Africa, the arms of the Arabs advanced as far as Tripolis ; the islands of Cyprus and Rhodes were taken and made tributary. The capture of the city of Rhodes is celebrated in history on account of the fate of the colossal statue of the sun, which was broken to pieces and sold, the fragments being carried away by 900 camels. The Christian Berbers, in the north of Africa about Mount Atlas, were subdued with considerable difficulty, but opened to the Arabs the road towards the Atlantic. It deserves, however, to be noticed that, notwithstanding the brilliant successes abroad, the caliphate was already entering upon a period of internal decay : one insurrection broke out after another, and the authority of Othman, whose pride and avarice made him unpopular among his subjects, was unable to keep together the body of the faithful in the manner in which Omar had done. Everywhere the individuality of a general, the nationality of special provinces, or the personal authority of men, distinguished for their knowledge of the Koran, began to assert its right, and throw off the yoke which had hitherto kept down all alike in the same submissiveness. Othman, however, attempted to restore unity and his own despotism in doctrinal matters, which were in reality the most important points. With this view he appointed a commission, consisting of the most learned among his friends, to prepare a new edition of the Koran. The men who undertook this task gave out that they used as

their basis the original text of Abu Beker ; but there can be no doubt that they, being partisans of Othman, were bent upon expunging from the text those passages to which hitherto appeals had been made by those who refused unconditional obedience to the caliph. The new and revised edition was invested with canonical authority, and in order to secure it and remove all causes of future doubt and dispute, the existing copies of the previous edition, wherever they were found in the wide dominions of the caliph, were most rigorously confiscated. But this measure did not, after all, succeed in bringing back to obedience all the malcontents. The simplicity, moreover, and frugality which had been strictly enforced by Omar, had gradually given way to luxury and licentiousness, which were fostered by the wealth accumulated during the foreign conquests. The proud caliph, lastly, by a system of favouritism towards his own relations, whom he enriched and promoted to the highest offices in the conquered provinces, excited so much discontent among his subjects, that they besieged and murdered him in his own house at Medina, in 655.

During the tumult accompanying the murder of Othman, Ali, Mahomed's son-in-law, who had long been regarded by a powerful party as the only lawful successor to the prophet, was at length raised to the caliphate. As he was married to the prophet's daughter, Fatima, those who supported his claims were called Fatimides, and looked upon Abu Beker, Omar, and Othman as mere usurpers. The ruling party, which had hitherto successfully opposed Ali, treated him and his followers as schismatics or Shiites, while they themselves claiming to be supported by the orthodox tradition (Sonna), assumed the name of Sonnites. The latter went so far in their hatred of the Shiites as to charge them with the murder of Othman. The division thus created among the Mahomedans led to long and bloody wars, and runs through their history down to the present day, the Turks being Sonnites and the Persians Shiites.

No sooner had Ali been appointed than the Ommyiad Moawiyah, the leader of the Sonnites, and a general of great merit, came forward as the avenger of Othman, and demanded the dignity of caliph for himself. He was at the time governor of Syria, where his party was most powerful, while Ali established himself in Irak, a country devoted to his interests. Ali, to avoid a hostile conflict, proposed that the claim to the caliphate should be decided by single combat, and as Moawiyah evaded this, it was arranged that the question should be decided by arbitration. But all this led to no result, and when at last the struggle between the two rivals broke out, some pious zealots, regarding this conduct of their chiefs as a simple rebellion against the commands of the Koran, formed a plot for the purpose of murdering both Ali and his opponent. But Ali alone was assassinated in 661, and Moawiyah ascended the throne. Hasan, Ali's son, contrived to rally round himself the friends of his family in Persia, and to wage war against Moawiyah; but he and all his force were overpowered by the enemy. Moawiyah, who was now generally recognised as caliph, endeavoured with relentless cruelty to extirpate the whole race of Ali. The party of the latter, however, cherished and propagated the tradition, especially in Persia, that Ali alone had been the legitimate successor of the prophet. These adherents of Ali, the Shiites, in the course of time also began to differ in their interpretation of several passages in the Koran from that which was current among their enemies, the Sonnites; nay, they even went so far as to reject altogether certain extensions and alterations which they conceived had been introduced by Abu Beker and Othman among the genuine revelations of the Koran.

5. The dynasty of the Ommyiades, which began in the person of Moawiyah, continued in the possession of the caliphate from 661 to 750, and gave thirteen caliphs to the Moslem empire, which under their dominion attained its greatest terri-

torial extent. We cannot here enter into an account of the reigns of the different caliphs, but must confine our remarks to the principal occurrences and changes which took place during the reign of the Ommyiad dynasty.

When Moawiyah I. found himself in possession of the caliphate, he took up his residence at Damascus, which he made the capital of his dominions instead of Mecca or Medina. This step, unimportant though it might appear, was closely connected with a succession of changes made by the caliph in organizing his dominions. Hitherto the authority of the ruler had been purely personal : every believer, it is true, owed to him blind obedience, provided he demanded nothing but what was contained in the Koran ; but in the multiplicity of the relations of common life, on which it was impossible to expect to find precepts in the sacred book, the caliph could not secure obedience, unless his personal character showed him to be entitled to it, so that, with all his absolute power, he was to a certain extent always dependent on public opinion. The relation subsisting between the caliph and his subjects had hitherto not been visible in the forms of intercourse between them ; there had been no trace of any mysterious seclusion, and no trace of any courtly pomp calculated to overawe the multitude, which everywhere else in the East seems to be a necessary adjunct of despotism. The caliphs had lived precisely in the same manner as private Arabs, and had they acted otherwise, every believer would have considered their conduct highly censurable : as long as Mecca or Medina were the residence of the caliph, any innovation in this respect would have been extremely dangerous. The fanatical love of liberty and equality cherished by the Arabs would never have tolerated a caliph living in the midst of them to withdraw himself, as it were, to an unapproachable distance. But Moawiyah was determined to become a despot, like all other eastern rulers ; and to effect this, it was above all things necessary to withdraw himself from

every-day life and from intimacy with those who had obtained any influence with the people. This obliged him to fix upon some place out of Arabia as his residence and the seat of his government. Damascus, being situated about the centre of the recent conquests, and near the rich coasts of Syria and the fertile plains of Mesopotamia, seemed the most suitable spot. It was, moreover, not far from Arabia itself, so that the caliph might reasonably hope to be able to maintain his authority over the country, which was still the centre and focus of his vast empire.

His next step was to surround himself with great courtly pomp and splendour; and henceforth the person of the caliph was no longer the ever-present manager of public business, but the invisible soul of the empire, mysteriously concealed and seen only by the most favoured individuals. Connected with this change was the establishment of a regular organization and gradation of a large number of officials to conduct the administration, superintend the levying of taxes, and govern the provinces. All these arrangements were made on a very simple plan, the leading principle of which was that every officer should exercise over those below him the same unlimited authority which the caliph himself exercised over all. Each officer, therefore, within his own sphere, was an absolute despot, a caliph on a small scale, without any one either beside or below him to exercise any kind of control, while in his relation to a superior officer he himself was as much a slave as the meanest of his subjects.

An empire with such a constitution might easily display the most astonishing strength and power, so long as the name of the ruler had a real hold on the hearts of his subjects, and inspired them with that almost idolatrous reverence which his position demanded. But it was equally easy for any one of his servants, who in his sphere represented the omnipotence of the caliph, to forget that his life and property were in the

power of the sovereign, and only to remember his own omnipotence in reference to those below him. If such a one had the necessary means, he might in his own sphere or province easily assume the power of the caliph himself; and as all below him were absolutely dependent on him, he had no reason to dread any opposition within his own province, and could be crushed only by a power attacking him from without.

This danger, however, destined as it was to ruin the caliphate, was as yet looming at a great distance. Moawiyah and several of his successors were men of great ability, and their power was strengthened by the ever-extending conquests, which enabled them to get rid of many elements of discord and discontent, while they heightened the glory of the caliph by whose command and in whose name they were achieved, increased the already enormous revenues, and diffused wealth and luxuries among all classes of the Mahomedans. The new forms of despotism, however, were ill suited to the tribes of Arabia itself, and Moawiyah made no attempt to introduce them there: the Arabs were kept in good humour so long as they had opportunities of displaying their valour and prowess.

While Moawiyah thus established the hereditary despotism of his family over the Mahomedan empire, foreign conquests continued to be made in all directions. He extended his dominion in the north as far as Samarkand, and in the east as far as the Indus and Bokhara; at the same time he availed himself of the rising of Sapor in Armenia against the Byzantine emperor to send his Arabs into Asia Minor; he created a powerful navy in the Mediterranean, which was commanded by an Amir-al-Ma (that is, a commander at sea, whence our word admiral), with which he threatened Constantinople seven years in succession. In the reign of Caliph Walid, about 707, the conquests in the east were still continued, but two sieges of Constantinople under his immediate successor proved complete failures, and during the second of them, in 717, the

whole fleet of the Arabs was destroyed by the Greek fire, while a land army of more than 100,000 men was annihilated by famine, plague, and an unusually severe winter.

After these useless attempts upon the capital of the eastern empire, which was secured by its strong position, even after the Arabs had gained the ascendancy at sea, the prowess of the Arabs was displayed in a different direction, and Constantinople maintained itself for several centuries longer against its enemies. The main object of the caliphs ever was to establish their power in Europe, and they had hoped to attain this most completely and easily by making themselves masters of Constantinople; but when this was found impracticable, they directed their attention principally to the north coast of Africa. Immense progress was made in these quarters by their brave and able general Musa, not only among the native populations, such as the Berber tribes of Mount Atlas, but also among the African subjects of the Greek empire, who being crushed under the weight of the taxes they had to pay, even invited the Arabs. At length, in 698, the conquest of Carthage, which was destroyed by fire, and the reduction of the Mauritians or Moors, who rose several times against their new rulers, put the Arabs in possession of the whole of the north coast of Africa as far as the Straits of Gibraltar. Having accomplished this they began to cast eager looks across the Straits into Spain, and now resolved to accomplish the subjugation of all Christendom from the west, which they had been unable to effect from the Bosphorus. Never had Christianity been exposed to greater dangers. The internal condition of Spain was such as to facilitate the scheme of the Arabs. It is true, that ever since the time of Reccared, the Visigothic kingdom in Spain was based upon a more solid foundation than any of the other Germanic states, which had been formed in the countries once under the dominion of Rome, for both the Visigoths and the Romanized Spaniards were now orthodox Catholics,

and the two elements of the population had become almost entirely amalgamated in all the relations of life. The Roman element naturally predominated, being both the more numerous and the more civilized; and this predominance went so far, that both nations not only spoke the same language, which was essentially Latin, but were governed by laws the spirit of which was almost entirely Roman. This close union between the conquerors and the conquered produced a similar union between the powers of the Church and those of the State, whereby the latter seemingly gained a considerable addition to its strength. Formerly the Arian kings had been unable to check the mighty influence of the orthodox church upon the people, while afterwards the Catholic monarchs did all they could to show themselves as faithful sons of the Church: they overwhelmed her and her servants with honours and riches, and the prelates occupied the first places at court. In no country did the Catholic church hold so favourable a position as in Spain, but this position, at the same time, drew her into political troubles. She acquired the habit of claiming to be regarded as a political power of the first rank, and to have a decisive voice in all important matters of the administration. In a well-organized monarchy such a state of things might not have been very dangerous; but the Visigothic kingdom suffered from the same evils which more or less formed the radical disease of all the Germanic states which had been founded within the limits of the Roman empire. These evils were, on the one hand, the absolute power of the rulers who refused to acknowledge any limits, and, on the other, the boundless love of independence and the avarice of those nearest the throne. It was of no avail that some vigorous sovereigns had strengthened the royal prerogative and humbled the insolence of the nobles, for measures of this kind were always followed by disputes about the succession, which afforded the best opportunities for weakening the power of the monarch. A kingdom in such a condition was unable to

maintain itself when assailed from without by a well-organized power.

At the time when the Arabs appeared on the Straits of Gibraltar, the confusion in the Visigothic kingdom had reached its greatest height. King Roderic, who ascended the throne in 710, was regarded by a party among the nobles, headed by the sons of his predecessor Witiza, as a usurper. As this party was unable to gain its end by intrigues, Julian, one of its generals, applied to Musa, the Arab governor of Africa, who at once sent across an army under the command of Tarik. The apathy of the Spanish people was so great, that even this invasion by the enemies of their religion was scarcely able to rouse them. A single great battle fought, in 711, at Xeres, not far from Cadiz, sufficed to break every opposition of any consequence, and Tarik almost completed the conquest of the whole of the Visigothic kingdom ; for immediately after the battle, the Arabs ceased to regard themselves as the allies of a party, and acted as the army of the faithful whose sacred duty it was to conquer the world. All the large towns, one after another, fell into their hands ; in many instances they were supported in secret by the Jews, who were very numerous in Spain and had been most cruelly oppressed by the Catholic church. Spain, with the exception of the mountainous districts of the north, where a portion of the Visigothic nobles sought and found refuge, became a province of the caliphate. The Christians and Jews who submitted to their new rulers, had to pay a small tribute, but retained their own laws and the liberty to worship God in their own way.

Unconcerned about the small band of Goths who had made their escape in the north, the Arabs, after securing the submission of the rest of Spain, formed the plan of advancing eastward by land, conquering the Christian kingdoms one after another, and thus approaching Constantinople from the west. As early as the year 720 they crossed the Pyrenees, notwithstanding all the

difficulties which the nature of the country and the valour of the native Basques placed in their way. They first subdued Eudo, Duke of Aquitaine, who, in his isolated position, was unable to offer any efficient resistance and saw no safety except in the assistance of the Franks. The Arabs being well aware that they would have to encounter the Franks, collected as vast an army as they could. But all their gigantic preparations were of no avail, and their progress was checked, in 732, in the memorable battle near Poitiers, in which the Arabs, commanded by Abd-el-rhaman, were completely defeated by the Franks under Charles Martel.¹

Exactly a century had now passed since the death of Mahomed, and during that period the Arab conquests had spread like an avalanche over all the countries between the Indus and the Atlantic. In the north, the Arab empire extended to the steppes of Kurdistan, the Caspian, Mount Caucasus, some parts of which the Mahomedans had already crossed, and to a line from the eastern corner of the Black Sea to Tarsus in Cilicia, including Pontus and Cappadocia which were tributary ; in Europe they possessed Cyprus, Crete, Rhodes, the Balearian islands, Spain, some coast districts of Italy, and the south coast of France, from the Pyrenees to the mouth of the Rhone. No empire of antiquity had ever acquired such an extent. But this vast accumulation of territories, consisting of such heterogeneous elements, could not easily be kept together ; it soon fell to pieces and was divided into three parts : the Asiatic governed by the Abbasides, or descendants of Abbas, an uncle of Mahomed ; the Spanish by the Ommiyads, and the African by the Fatimides.

During the great and rapid conquests, the internal strength of Islamism had already become weakened. The excessive excitability of the national character of the Arabs, and the fervour of their religious and warlike fanaticism, had been sacrificed or made to suit the unbending despotism of the caliph and the

¹ See p. 111.

mechanical regularity of his government. Nothing, however, appeared as yet to reveal any symptoms of decay, except that their victorious arms had been checked at two most important points, on the Bosphorus and on the field of Poitiers. Such defeats, until then unknown to the Mahomedans, compelled them to acknowledge that, after all, there existed a power greater than their own ; and no advantages gained in other quarters could counterbalance this disadvantage. The court despotism of the caliph was indeed firmly established, but was at the same time accompanied by the usual consequences of an eastern court despotism, which soon manifested themselves in a desire of independence on the part of the higher officials and of the governors of distant provinces.

Amid these circumstances sectarian parties sprang up on all sides, and everywhere the religious opposition was accompanied by political and national antipathies. Persia, in particular, was the focus of rebellious commotions ; for during the ascendancy of the Ommiyad dynasty, the descendants of Ali and those of Abbas, the uncle of Mahomed, had been constantly in a hostile attitude towards the ruling caliphs and had even set up caliphs of their own. At last, in the reign of Caliph Mervan II., the Abbaside Ibrahim ventured to rise in open rebellion. Ibrahim fell in battle, but his brother Abul Abbas, after having gained over Chorasán and Irak, was proclaimed caliph at Kufa, and maintained himself in a struggle against Mervan on the river Zab. Mervan, the last of the Ommiyad dynasty, being defeated, fled into Egypt, where he was killed in 750, and by his death the caliphate came into the hands of the Abbasides. All the members of the Ommiyad family were now destroyed with the exception of Abd-el-rhman who escaped into Africa, and having crossed over into Spain, was recognised as the legitimate caliph, and founded, in 755, an independent caliphate at Cordova. All the other parts of the Mahomedan empire acknowledged Abul Abbas as their legitimate sovereign, and this new dynasty adopted

the Sonnite views. His brother and successor Al Mansur, transferred his residence from Damascus to the newly-built city of Bagdad, on the frontiers of Persia, which was henceforth regarded as the chief portion of the Mahomedan empire, the Persian language and civilisation also being most honoured at the court. By this means the arts and sciences cultivated by the Persians spread over all parts of the vast dominions of the caliph. During the reign of the Sassanidae, Persia had always been hostile to the Byzantine empire, both on political and religious grounds, but had nevertheless derived from it many elements of civilisation. One part of its population was engaged in all those trades which had reached their highest development in the Greek empire, while another was extensively occupied in commerce, especially in conveying the products of China and India to the western parts of Asia. Hence Persia, at the time of its conquest by the Arabs, enjoyed a very high degree of material prosperity. The deadly war against the religion of Zoroaster and against everything opposed to the doctrines of Islam, though it disturbed this prosperity, was nevertheless unable to destroy it. The Persians, always accessible to foreign influences, had gradually adopted the religion of Mahomed, though, by opposing the Ommiyad dynasty, they had maintained a certain degree of independence. Their ancient literature and poetry, by accommodating themselves, at least in form, to the new state of things, were protected against the suspicions of the Mahomedans. All the elements of a high civilisation which had thus been gradually formed, were now concentrated in the new capital of Bagdad, and Al Mansur did everything in his power to foster and develop them. His example and that of his two successors, Ibn Mahomed and Harun al Rashid, exercised a most extraordinary influence ; and within a very short period the greater part of the empire of the caliphs was, at least in a material point of view, the most cultivated and most civilized part of the earth. Immense sums of money were

spent upon making roads, erecting public buildings of every description, upon promoting the prosperity of the large industrial towns, upon the cultivation of the arts, especially architecture and poetry, and upon the establishment of schools and other learned institutions. The civilisation of the Persians, which had originally been much indebted to the Greeks, now again derived nourishment from the same source ; and while the fleets and armies of the two empires were almost incessantly engaged in hostile operations, there still existed an active intercourse in the peaceful pursuits of life, in which, however, the Mahomedans were purely recipients, not having anything to communicate to their instructors. It was mainly owing to this influence of the Greeks that the Mahomedans cultivated the study of mathematics, some of the natural sciences, and the formal portion of Greek philosophy, which had been most consistently developed by Aristotle. All these elements of material and intellectual prosperity were successfully developed under the protection of an all-powerful despotism. The arms of the caliph and his servants were strong enough to protect the tradesman and merchant in the most distant parts of the empire, and to enable the student to devote himself entirely to his intellectual pursuits, without being obliged to concern himself about anything else : and all this happened at a time when the Christian world, with the exception of Constantinople, had sunk into the wildest confusion and barbarism.

But notwithstanding all this outward splendour, the decay of the caliphate was fast approaching. Its only bond of union was the religion of Islam, which was powerful so long as the caliphs were thoroughly animated by its spirit, and were capable of fanning it whenever that spirit appeared to flag or to be in danger of extinction. The Abbasides, however, under the influence of Persian and Greek ideas, were no longer inspired with that overflowing ardour of faith which had won for their predecessors the dominion of the world. All the elements of ambition, avarice,

and religious and military fanaticism, which had once been displayed with the greatest energy against the enemies of the faith, were now gradually turned against the central power. This led Abd-el-rhaman in Spain to assert his independence of what he called the schismatics of Bagdad ; and his example was soon followed by the whole of Africa, which, with the exception of Egypt, constituted itself as an independent caliphate under the dynasty of the Fatimides. In 968, Egypt also was gained over by the Fatimides. In Asia portions of Persia also revolted, and in this manner one province after another was lost ; so that even in the tenth century, the caliphate was almost confined to Bagdad and its territory and obliged to support itself by the almost fabulous treasures there accumulated and by the prestige of its former greatness. Its main protection consisted in a body of Turkish praetorians, who enabled the ruler to retain the possession of his immensely wealthy and splendid city and to luxuriate in the almost fabulous splendour of his palaces. But the caliphate nevertheless continued to exist until about the middle of the thirteenth century, when it fell before the invading hosts of the Mongols.

BOOK II

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CHARLEMAGNE TO THE BEGINNING OF THE CRUSADES, FROM 768 TO 1096.

CHAPTER I.

CHARLEMAGNE.

1. Accession of Charlemagne ; 2. Wars against the Saxons ; 3. War against the Lombards ; 4. The war in Spain ; 5. Wars against the Bavarians, Avars, &c. ; 6. Restoration of the Western Empire ; 7. The last years of Charlemagne ; 8. Charlemagne's private life ; 9. Charlemagne's administration of his empire.

1. IT has already been stated* that Pepin le Bref at his death, in 768, left two legitimate sons, Charles (commonly called Charlemagne, or Charles the Great) and Carloman. Their succession had been secured through their anointment by Pope Stephen II. and the solemn recognition of the people ; but some of the distant provinces nevertheless took advantage of Pepin's death by attempting to throw off the yoke of the Franks. The attempt, however, was even less successful than it had been after the death of Charles Martel. Charles was then about twenty-six years old. Immediately after their father's demise, the two brothers undertook the administration of their respective provinces, Carloman having obtained the southern and Charles the northern half : both in their capacity of Roman

* See p. 120.

patricians exercised the protectorate over the church in common, and both were bound in like manner to undertake the complete reduction of Aquitaine. By this novel arrangement different nationalities were united under the same sovereign, a circumstance which was probably calculated to prevent the ever-threatening dissolution of the empire into its national elements. Each of the two brothers was no doubt equally desirous of securing the whole empire to himself, but fortune favoured Charles, for as Carloman died in 771, Charles at once took possession of the entire monarchy, excluding Carloman's sons from the succession, though not without observing some plausible forms to justify his conduct. The widow of Carloman fled with her children to the court of Desiderius, king of the Lombards, with whom her husband had been allied, and whose daughter Charles had repudiated. This flight was interpreted by Charles's friends as an act by which the fugitives had forfeited their claims to the succession. Pope Adrian I., who had just been elected to the papal see, was appealed to by Desiderius to protect the Frankish princes ; but instead of complying with this request, the Pope courted favour with their uncle, whose friendship he had already gained by divorcing him from his first wife, the daughter of Desiderius.

As soon as Charles was in the undisputed possession of the Frankish throne, he at once proceeded to direct all the powers of his kingdom against its enemies. His plan, however, was not only to restore the Frankish empire to the position it had once occupied, but to change the relation of those states which had hitherto enjoyed a kind of independence under Frankish supremacy into one of complete subjection ; nay, he even went beyond these limits, entering upon the career of a great conqueror, which scarcely any of his predecessors had ventured upon. For these tasks he not only possessed talents of a higher order than either Pepin or Charles Martel, but circumstances also were much more favourable to him. His birth gave him a right to the

throne, and he inherited a power already acknowledged by the nation during a period of sixteen years. He was thus free from the dangers that usually threaten a usurper ; and as his reign extended over nearly half a century, he had ample time for carrying out his plans, which were of a twofold nature ; first to unite under his sceptre all the Germanic tribes, and, secondly, to bind its different parts together by one uniform organization and civilisation. In his endeavours to realize these plans, Charles effected more than any of the Germanic princes who had preceded him in any part of Europe.

2. His first undertaking on a great scale was directed against the Saxons, who were threatening his frontiers, and whose relation to the Frankish empire had even become worse through the victories of Pepin. For immediately after his death they had made several attempts to recover their independence, and greatly disturbed the Frankish frontier on the lower Maine and the middle Rhine. The Christian churches established in those parts by Winfred especially were in the greatest danger from the pagan Saxons, who raged against them with national and religious fanaticism. The Saxons in their struggle against the Frankish monarch could hardly expect to be supported by their brethren in Britain, for the latter were as yet much divided among themselves, having not yet succeeded in uniting under one head. Their sympathies must, on the contrary, have been rather with Charles, in his endeavours to subdue and Christianize the Saxons. The only quarter to which the Saxons could look for any assistance were the Danes (Northmen or Normans).

In the year 772, Charles, at a diet held at Worms, resolved upon undertaking an expedition against the Saxons. They occupied the countries bordering upon the German Ocean, south of the river Elbe, and clung with inveterate obstinacy to their ancient mode of life, their liberty, and their paganism. They do not seem to have been united by any political institution ;

at least they are described as divided into three or four branches or tribes, occupying different countries of which it is impossible to mark the exact boundaries. One branch on the north of the Elbe bore the name of Transalbiani ; while on the Weser we find them under the names of Angrarii, Ostfalae (on the east of the river), and Westfalae (on the west of it), and extending from the Weser to the Rhine, where they were more especially troublesome neighbours of the Franks. In his first campaign, in 772, Charles conquered a considerable portion of the mountainous districts about the Weser, whereby the Westfalae were separated from the Ostfalae, and Charles already began to calculate upon the reduction of the whole Saxon nation at no distant period. He destroyed the famous but mysterious idol called Irminsul, and established everywhere strong forts which were intended both to keep the Saxons in subjection and to serve as safe stations for the Christian missionaries ; for it was his intention that the conversion of the Saxons should go hand in hand with their political subjugation, for which purpose a number of Frankish, Anglo-Saxon, and other German missionaries accompanied his army and remained behind in the conquered country.

But how little permanent security was gained by his victory became evident in the following year, when, during Charles's engagement in Italy against the Lombards, the Saxons rose in arms, recovered their fortress of Eresburg, and under their brave leader Wittikind, advanced almost to the banks of the Rhine. Immediately on his return from Italy, Charles, at a diet convened at Düren (near Cologne), ordered all the military forces of his empire to be got ready, for he was determined to continue the war against his enemies until either their conversion or their annihilation was complete. There now follows a succession of campaigns, in the first of which, in 775, Charles after crossing the Rhine proceeded up the Rühr, took one of their strong forts, and passed across the Weser through the territory

of the Ostfalee as far as the river Ocker, where all the Ostfalee, headed by their chief, took the oath of allegiance and gave hostages to their conqueror. On his return he found the same submissiveness among the Angrarii, but the Westfalee did not follow the example until they were compelled by a serious defeat. All the Saxons on the south of the Elbe were thus subdued, but we hear as yet nothing of their conversion.

During a second absence of Charles in Italy, the Saxons again took and destroyed Eresburg, and Charles, after holding a diet at Worms in 776, advanced into the enemies' territory as far as the sources of the Lippe, devastating everything that came in his way. The Saxons, terrified by his sternness and severity, implored his mercy, which was granted, and those who were willing to become Christians were baptized. Eresburg was restored and forts were built, but the conqueror so little trusted the promises of the Saxons, although they had given hostages, that in the spring of 777 he held a diet at Paderborn, and there assembled a large army for the purpose of making the Saxons acquainted with the military institutions of the Franks, and accustoming them to the service in his armies. Many noble Saxons appeared at the diet, but Wittikind had fled to the Danes in the north, for he had been the real instigator of the repeated revolts of his countrymen. Large numbers of Saxons also submitted to be baptized, though this was done only to please the conqueror, and without any conviction of the truth of Christianity. Soon after this Charles undertook an expedition into Spain, whither he was invited by one Arab chief against another. During his absence a report was spread that he had suffered great disasters in the Pyrenees, and the Saxons, instigated by Wittikind, who had returned among his countrymen, advanced to the banks of the Rhine, where they ravaged the whole country of the Riparian Franks from Deutz to Coblenz, and by destroying the Christian churches and murdering indiscriminately whoever fell into their hands, avenged

themselves upon the destroyers of their liberty. This happened in 778. Charles ordered at once an army of the eastern Franks and Alemannians to march against them, and the Saxons being overtaken on their return home sustained a great defeat. In the following year Charles himself, after holding a diet at Düren, led a Frankish army across the Rhine, defeated the enemy in a great battle near Bocholt, and advanced as far as the Weser, receiving hostages from the Westfalae, Angrarii, and Ostfalae, who at the same time renewed their solemn oath of allegiance. In 780 he advanced with a numerous army to the river Ocker, where many Ostfalae, merely for the sake of appearance, allowed themselves to be baptized. Charles then continued his march to the Elbe, the right bank of which was chiefly occupied by Slavonic tribes, which afforded to Charles a welcome opportunity for interfering in their internal affairs.

After this Charles was again obliged to go to Italy, and the Saxons remained quiet until 782, when the king held a second diet in their country, and ambassadors from the Danes and Avars appeared before him. Scarcely, however, had he returned across the Rhine, when Wittikind again incited the Saxons to revolt. At the same time Charles learned that the Sorabi, a Slavonic tribe, had invaded the territory of the Thuringians and Saxons. Against these new enemies he sent an army of Franks and Saxons; but his generals on their march suddenly found themselves surrounded by Saxons, and their Frankish forces were almost annihilated. Charles, indignant at such treacherous conduct, hastened with a large army into the country of the Saxons, for the purpose of inquiring into the causes of the rebellion and punishing the guilty. All the Saxon nobles who appeared before him threw the chief blame on Wittikind, who had again fled to the Normans, and consented to deliver up to him 4500 men who had conspired with him. All these 4500 were butchered in one day near Verden on the Aller, by the command of Charles.

This excessive severity only increased the exasperation of the struggling people, and led to a general insurrection and a fresh war, which lasted for three years. In 783, the Saxons assembled a large force near Detmold, but Charles, falling upon them with unexpected rapidity, destroyed almost the whole of them, and then withdrew to Paderborn to wait for reinforcements. Meanwhile the Saxons rallied not far from Osnabrück, where they sustained a second defeat. Charles then advanced to the Elbe, ravaging the country in all directions, and fully expected to be able in the following year to bring the war with the Saxons to a final termination. Accordingly, in 784, he proceeded through the country of the Westfalæ to the Weser, but, finding the plains inundated, turned south and marched through Thuringia towards the Saale. On his return from this expedition he defeated the Saxons, and took up his winter quarters at Eresburg, laying waste the country as far as his arms could reach. In the spring of 785, having advanced to Lüneburg, he was informed that Wittikind and his friend Abbio had appeared among the Saxons and were willing to enter into negotiations. Charles consented; he conducted the negotiations through the medium of their own countrymen, and having guaranteed his two chief enemies an amnesty, he desired them to appear before him at Attigny, where both received baptism. After this Wittikind, who had now become convinced of the impossibility of maintaining the independence of his countrymen against the Franks, never again attempted to induce them to revolt, and for a period of eight years we hear no more of Saxon wars.

But the old Saxon spirit of freedom was only slumbering, not extinct; and after the people had somewhat recovered from the preceding disasters, strong symptoms of its existence were manifested in a succession of attempts at insurrection, which were continued from the year 793 until 802. In the former of these years, when Charles called upon the Saxons to furnish

their contingent for a war against the Avars, they rose in every part of their country. Charles and his son advanced against them by different roads, and on the approach of the two armies, the Saxons, surprised by the king's rapid movements, and without venturing to offer battle, surrendered and gave hostages. In 795, Charles again entered their country with a large force, and pitched his camp near Bardowik. On learning that Wizzin, the king of the Abodritae and an old ally of his, had fallen into an ambuscade laid for him by the Saxons, he was thrown into a state of the greatest exasperation, and ravaged the country as far as the river Elbe. In the two following years he made similar expeditions, and did not rest until he reached the extreme boundary of the Saxon country. During the winter of 797-8, he remained among the Saxons, hoping thereby finally to establish his dominion over them. But, in the spring of 798, the Transalbingian Saxons murdered the ambassadors whom he had sent among them for the purpose of arranging terms of peace, and rose in open rebellion against the Franks. Charles, who was encamped on the Weser, punished the rebels by laying waste all the country about the Elbe. The Saxons took refuge in the territory of the Slavonic nation of the Abodritae, but being repelled by them, they were obliged to submit to the terms dictated by the conqueror. In 799, when Charles was encamped near Paderborn, Pope Leo III., who had occupied the papal see little more than two years, and had been expelled by the Roman people, appeared before him to solicit his aid and protection. The king obeyed the call, and we shall see hereafter with what success.* The last time that Charles had to send an army into the country of the Saxons was in 802; two years later he caused 10,000 Saxons, men, women, and children, to be transplanted from the country about the Elbe to the ancient seats of the Franks, that is, the provinces of Flanders and Brabant, which had until then been very thinly peopled. Similar measures appear to have been adopted by him on former occa-

* See p. 171.

sions also. Some of the districts once occupied by the Saxons on the north of the Elbe were now ceded to the Abodritae, while others were given to Franks.

Thus ended the long and wearisome struggle against the Saxons, who had manfully striven to assert their independence, as long as there was the slightest chance of maintaining it. A peace appears to have been now concluded. Charles's vigorous and persevering efforts had at last completely broken their powers of resistance, and his success in arms as well as the prudence with which he treated Wittikind, Abbio, and other Saxon nobles, and induced the mass of the people to abandon their native gods and embrace Christianity, made his name illustrious in the East as well as in the West. The Saxons, and apparently the Frisians also, henceforth recognised Charles and his successors as their lawful kings for all time to come, and they, with the Franks, formed one united state; but at the same time both Saxons and Frisians retained, in the main, their own laws (*Lex Saxonum* and *Lex Frisionum*), which seem to have been collected and committed to writing about that time. The conquered people, accordingly, were not treated as subjects but as equals of the Franks, and paid no tribute, but, like the Franks, only tithes to the clergy. Their whole country was divided into a number of counties, the chiefs of which were appointed by the king, and all the Saxons capable of bearing arms were bound to serve the king whenever he needed their aid in war; the punishment inflicted on those who refused obedience in this respect being the same as in all other parts of the Frankish dominions. Lastly, the Saxons, after having embraced Christianity, bound themselves to obey the church and its ministers, especially the bishops, for immediately after their subjugation Charles had divided their country into eight bishoprics, the sees of which were at Osnabrück, Minden, Halberstadt, Verden, Bremen, Paderborn, Münster, and Hildesheim.

Simultaneously with these wars against the Saxons, in which Charles was engaged for upwards of thirty years, he had to carry on others against the Lombards in Italy, the Arabs in Spain, the Bavarians, Avars, and others in the south and east of Germany: in all these, as in the Saxon wars, the king's personal ambition went hand in hand with political and ecclesiastical interests. The wars in Italy and Spain, though of short duration, contributed more than any of the others to spread his renown as the champion of the church over all Christendom.

3. When, in 773, the youthful hero for the moment gave up his plans against the Saxons, and complied with the request of the Pope to lend him his powerful arm against the Lombards, Charles only followed the policy of his predecessors. All circumstances had long since combined to induce the holy see to look to the Franks as its natural allies and supporters against the Lombards, whose king Desiderius was well aware that the Franks were his most dangerous enemies.* In Italy, as in Germany, Charles acted with a vigour and energy which astonished all the world, and brought matters to a speedy and final decision, where Charles Martel and Pepin had been satisfied with partial success. Pope Hadrian I., the learned and energetic successor of Stephen III., was determined not to yield to the arrogance of the Lombard king, and invoked the aid of Charles against him. The Frankish monarch without hesitation declared himself ready to defend the Pope and the Romans. Until then Desiderius had both openly and secretly shown the greatest hostility to Charles. The origin of the ill feeling between the two kings was, that Charles had first married a daughter of Desiderius, and after divorcing her and sending her back to her father, married Hildegarda, daughter of the Duke of Suabia. Desiderius' conduct after this had been such as almost to force Charles into a war against him, for he had taken Carloman's sons under his protection, and by carrying on intrigues within

* See p. 165.

the Frankish kingdom, had hoped to be able, with the aid of the papal authority, to set up the two princes as pretenders against Charles. But when Pope Hadrian, who knew the importance of keeping on good terms with the Frankish monarch, refused to co-operate with him, Desiderius threw off the mask of humble devotion to the church, and unceremoniously seized upon its worldly possessions. In these circumstances, Charles could not hesitate for a moment as to how he should act: with one part of his army he marched across Mount Cenis, while another under his uncle Bernard crossed the great St. Bernard (until then called *Mons Jovis*). Desiderius was besieged in Pavia, and Charles, contrary to ancient custom, ordered his nobles to continue the siege during the winter of 773-4. At last, after a siege of ten months, Desiderius was obliged to surrender; he was made prisoner and sent into a convent, where he spent the remainder of his life. Charles made the Lombards take the oath of allegiance to him and recognise him as their lawful king, but made no change in their laws and constitution. The Lombard kingdom was not incorporated with the Frankish monarchy, but remained a distinct kingdom, being united with the Franks only by being under the government of the same sovereign. This fundamental relation continued afterwards, even when important changes in other respects were found necessary. The Lombard kingdom then comprised the greater part of Italy, but the three most powerful Lombard dukes, of Friuli, Spoleto, and Benevento, still refused to recognise Charles as their sovereign, so that afterwards he had repeatedly to resort to arms for the purpose of reducing them to submission, though he never succeeded in completely subduing Benevento. Charles's intention had been to leave the constitution of his new kingdom untouched, but a conspiracy of several Lombard dukes who intended to place Adelchis, a son of Desiderius, on the throne, obliged him, in 776, to undertake a second expedition into Italy: the scheme of the con-

spirators was thwarted, and great changes were made in the constitution of the Lombard kingdom. Nearly all the dukes, who had hitherto been almost independent of the crown, and to the detriment of the royal prerogative had usurped excessive powers, were now deposed ; the country was divided, according to the Frankish fashion, into a number of counties, and their administration was intrusted to men attached to the interests of Charles, some of them actually Frankish counts. Large domains and confiscated estates were given to illustrious Franks as fiefs, whereby the king created in Lombardy a new feudal aristocracy thoroughly devoted to his interests, and forming at the same time a counterpoise to the native aristocracy of the country. The fact of Charles acting completely under the sanction of the papal authority also secured to him the support of the church in his Lombard dominion, while the great mass of the people looked with indifference upon the downfall of the Lombard dynasty and nobles, who were still more or less regarded by the Italians as aliens. It was owing to these and other circumstances that the Frankish dominion in Italy soon acquired a solid basis and lasted for many years in the midst of the greatest commotions and confusion. It deserves to be noticed that Charles, on a visit he paid to the Pope at Rome during the siege of Pavia, is said to have confirmed or even extended the grant made by Pepin to the Church of Rome, which comprised nearly the whole of the modern provinces of Romagna and the March of Ancona.

4. At the time when Charles, after his third campaign against the Saxons, was holding a diet at Paderborn in 777, his assistance was solicited against Abd-el-rhman, by the Arab governor of Saragossa, who had been exiled. The invasions of Gaul by the Arabs had become less frequent after the time of Charles Martel, and during the last years of Pepin's reign they had ceased altogether. After the subjugation of Aquitaine, Gaul had been restored to its ancient integrity, and a reaction

gradually took place, which led the Christians to take the offensive against the Mahomedans. Charles therefore gladly seized the present opportunity of interfering in the disputes among the infidels themselves, the more so, as he felt that thereby he might render a material service to the Christian church. In 778 he crossed the Pyrenees, and after conquering the town of Pampeluna, advanced across the Ebro and made himself master of Saragossa. The country between the Pyrenees and the Ebro fell into his hands, and he set up his Arab clients as tributary princes in one portion of the conquered territory, while another was united, under the name of the Spanish March, with the Frankish kingdom, to which it continued to belong until the twelfth century.

On his return, to which he was forced by reports of a fresh insurrection of the Saxons, he was attacked by the Basques (Vascones), through whose territory he was obliged to lead his forces; the hardy and warlike mountaineers defeated the Franks in a great battle in the valley of Roncesvalles; but this loss impaired neither the advantages nor the glory of his successful campaign against the Arabs. The battle of Roncesvalles and the death of Count Roland of Brittany who fell in it, have been immortalized in popular song and legends, which acquired particular celebrity during the period of the Crusades, and in which Charles and Roland were set forth as the very models of brave champions against the infidels.

5. The dukedom of Bavaria, which was governed by the dynasty of the Agilolfingians, had been reduced by Pepin to a kind of formal dependence, that is to say, the duchy constituted the hereditary dominion of the Agilolfingians, and its dukes, with the assistance of their estates, gave the laws to their subjects; but they were bound to appear at the Frankish diets, do homage to the Frankish king, and receive their ducal dignity from him. The Agilolfingians were connected by marriage with the Carlovingian dynasty. Tassilo, the last duke of

Bavaria, was married to a daughter of the Lombard king Desiderius, and as after the downfall of his father-in-law, it was evident that he contemplated to break through the obligations he had entered into with Pepin, Pope Hadrian I. at first endeavoured to screen him ; but when afterwards he renewed his acts of disobedience, the Pope refused to interfere, and, at a diet convened at Worms in 787, Charles resolved to invade Bavaria at several points with Frankish armies. Tassilo, who had scarcely expected this, appeared as a suppliant before Charles at Augsburg, and upon giving hostages obtained pardon for his past conduct. But in the year following, the Bavarians themselves accused him before Charles of intriguing with the Avars to stir them up against the Franks. He was tried by a diet assembled at Ingelheim, and sentenced to death, but Charles pardoned him and sent him into a convent in 788. Several Bavarian nobles who had been his accomplices were exiled, and the country of Bavaria lost the last traces of independence, and was henceforth incorporated with the Frankish empire, being divided into a number of counties. Soon after this, the Avars, who occupied the ancient province of Pannonia, invaded Bavaria according to the plan they had previously concerted with Tassilo ; but they were repulsed, and negotiations having been attempted in vain, Charles, in order to secure his eastern frontier, marched against them in 791 with all his forces. He himself conducted the first campaign, during which he advanced as far as the river Raab in Hungary. But considering the war against the Saxons of greater importance, he proceeded against the latter, leaving the command against the Avars to his son Pepin, who, in 796, took what was called the Ring of the Avars, a circular fort or enclosure, containing the enemy's treasures, all of which fell into the hands of the Franks. "No other war," says a contemporary writer, "enriched the Franks more, so that up to this time they seemed to have lived in poverty." The war had lasted six years, during which the country

of the Avars was fearfully ravaged, and the wild hordes of those barbarians, who for more than two centuries had been the terror of the west as well as of the east of Europe, were almost annihilated. All the Avar nobles are said to have perished. But notwithstanding this, a fresh war broke out in 799, in which the Duke of Friuli and the governor of Bavaria lost their lives. This was the last convulsive struggle of the Avars, for the strength of the nation was broken for ever. The Raab is henceforth mentioned as the eastern boundary of the Frankish empire, but the country even as far as the Theiss appears to have been tributary. The conquered and devastated country was partially repeopled by German colonists and secured against foreign invasion by the institution of the East March or eastern frontier county. It deserves to be noticed that during the war against the Avars, Charles conceived the gigantic idea of connecting the Rhine with the Danube by means of a canal between the Rednitz and Altmühl. The work was actually commenced, but never finished.

By the gradual extension of his empire, Charles had come in contact with the Northmen or Normans on the north of the Elbe, while in the north-east and east he could not avoid coming in conflict with Slavonian tribes. Even on his first approach to the Elbe he had endeavoured to establish peaceful relations with the Slavonic tribe of the Abodritae, who dwelt on the right bank of the river and had often made inroads into the territory between the Elbe and the Saale. Expeditions against the Slavonians in the east were undertaken in 782 and 789, in the latter of which years several Slavonic chiefs acknowledged the supremacy of the Frankish king. The Abodritae remained throughout his faithful allies, and in the end all the Slavonic tribes, as far as the Vistula, including the Bohemians, are said to have become tributary. The real boundary, however, in the north was the Elbe, except on the lower part of the river, where the Frankish empire extended as far as the Eider, and where

Charles had become involved in a war with the Danes, whose king had afforded protection to Wittikind. But after the final subjugation of the Saxons, in 804, the Danish king Godfrey entered into negotiations, in which the Eider was made the boundary between Denmark and the Frankish empire, and this arrangement was confirmed in 811 by a peace with Hemming, the successor of Godfrey. At the same time a strong wall was built extending from the North Sea to the Baltic, and known under the name of the Danewirk. The Frankish empire now extended to the Ebro in Spain, to the Tiber (and even beyond it) in Italy, to the Raab in Hungary, and to the Elbe and Eider in the north, comprising the whole of France, the north-eastern part of Spain, northern and middle Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, the whole of Germany, so far as it was then inhabited by Germans, and a portion of Hungary. The eastern frontier line cannot be determined with accuracy. Charles seems to have regarded the German part of his dominions as the real centre of his empire; at all events he generally resided in the German countries on the Rhine, from which he was enabled to watch over his German as well as his Romanized possessions. Aix-la-Chapelle, in particular, was his favourite residence on account of its baths; but we also find him residing at Ingelheim near Mayence, and at Nymwegen on the Lower Rhine. He never stayed at Paris, and whenever he held a full court, it was invariably in Germany. But however great his partiality towards the Germanic portions of his dominions might be, he could not but perceive that they stood in need of the culture and civilisation of his Romanized provinces, and his attention was ever directed towards Rome as the central seat of western Christianity, and towards the numerous remains of ancient Roman civilisation, which then existed in great numbers and in a state of almost perfect preservation in the western and southern provinces of the empire.

6. After having thus extended his kingdom in all directions, and done so much to establish and extend Christianity,

Charles might justly challenge comparison with the great Christian emperors of ancient Rome, more especially with Constantine, whose history had already assumed in the popular mind a legendary character ; and nothing was more natural than that many of the leading men of the time should look upon Charles as the real restorer of the western empire. He himself appears to have thought so likewise ; and had his wishes not been anticipated, he would undoubtedly have claimed the imperial crown and title. Leo III., who had succeeded Hadrian in the papacy, had been expelled during an insurrection of the Romans ; the legend adds, that his eyes and tongue were cut out by his wicked enemies, but were miraculously restored to him. The exiled pope took refuge with Charles, who was holding a diet at Paderborn in 799, and by his ambassadors prevailed upon the Romans to receive back their ecclesiastical chief. In the autumn of the year 800, Charles himself marched with an army into Italy, for the purpose of regulating the affairs of the church and of acting the part of a judge between the Pope and the Romans. When Leo had cleared himself by a solemn oath of the accusations brought against him, Charles on Christmas-day, in the year 800, attended divine service in the church of St. Peter, and while he was kneeling before the altar, the pope suddenly turned round and placed the imperial crown on his head, amid the acclamations of the assembled people, who shouted : Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, Emperor of the Romans ! He accepted the gift, and henceforth called himself Emperor and Augustus, though he is reported to have declared that he would not have gone to church on that day, if he had known the pope's intention. He must certainly have been surprised at the assumption of the man whom he had just rescued from the hands of the exasperated Romans, and who now of his own authority, and in concert with the fickle people of the capital, placed the imperial crown on his head. Charles would unquestionably have preferred taking the crown

himself instead of receiving it from the hands of a pope ; that such was his actual feeling, and that he did not like the idea of being indebted for it to any one but himself, is clear from the directions he left to his son Louis regarding the imperial crown. The step itself was appropriate and popular, for Charles or Charlemagne, as we shall henceforth call him, was in truth the ruler of nearly all the countries which had once constituted the western empire, and by his protectorate of the Roman church and his dignity of patricius, he had already been in a position approaching very nearly to that of a Roman emperor. The right assumed by the eastern emperor, of being the sovereign of the West also, had never been very popular, the prevailing notion still being that the empire ought to be divided between two sovereigns, and that its government by one ruler was only an exceptional state of things. The claims formerly advanced by the eastern emperor to the sovereignty over the city of Rome had long been regarded as forfeited by the complete neglect of his duties towards her, and by the dangerous heresies of which several of the eastern emperors had been guilty during the eighth century. The people of Rome, assuming, according to the ancient political fiction, that the rights of sovereignty were vested in themselves, thought themselves entitled to choose their own ruler, and it was this feeling that led them to hail Charlemagne's coronation with their enthusiastic acclamations. The empire being thus restored by the combined wishes of the Pope and the Roman people, the only two powers which, according to the views of the time, were entitled to take such a step, its legitimacy was beyond all dispute. As to the substantial addition made to his regal power by his elevation to the imperial dignity, no definite notions were or could be formed, but its mysterious sacredness itself acted like a magic influence, making the emperor appear as the highest personage in Christendom, and as standing in close relation to all the affairs of the church. In reference to

his subjects Charlemagne acquired no additional prerogative of any kind, except perhaps a claim to greater fidelity and attachment, and to a kind of reverential or religious obedience, such as he could not have demanded even in his capacity of an anointed king. This is the view which he himself appears to have taken of his new dignity ; for, in 802, while residing at Aix-la-Chapelle, he sent ambassadors to all parts of his dominions to demand of his subjects to renew the same oath of allegiance to him as emperor, which they had previously sworn to him as their king. The people, however, were told at the same time, that many and great things were implied in the new oath, as, for example, that for the sake of religion every one ought to do his duties most conscientiously, even where and when the eye of the emperor could not be upon him ; that every one ought specially to honour and respect the church, and abstain from injuring widows, orphans, and strangers. The monks were enjoined to live in accordance with the regulations of their orders and to instruct the people, while the judges were admonished to administer justice in conformity with the written laws, and not according to their own discretion.

By these measures, all the inhabitants of the empire became true subjects of its ruler, and the pope, who was regarded as the first bishop of the empire, together with all his clergy, entered into a relation of dependence on Charlemagne, similar to that in which he had formerly stood to the Roman emperors, and which nominally still subsisted between him and the emperor of the East. We must not, however, imagine that Charlemagne, like the emperors of old, assumed the position of a military despot : he could not have done this without the greatest offence to the German tribes, which still fondly cherished their ancient freedom ; and he was obliged to maintain and observe their peculiar national laws, at least so far as was compatible with his own plans of consolidating the empire and improving its condition by suitable legislation.

7. After being elevated to the imperial throne, Charlemagne's military activity ceased : he never was a reckless conqueror, and never carried on war for war's sake. The Frankish empire had now acquired an organic basis, as its boundaries almost coincided with those of the old Roman empire, or what was in reality the same thing, with those of western Christendom, which recognised the bishop of Rome as its head. But in order to secure what had been acquired with so much difficulty, an almost uninterrupted succession of petty wars was nevertheless unavoidable. The management in these wars was generally left to his generals, but more especially to his sons Charles, Pepin, and Louis. We have already seen that several insurrections of the Saxons had to be quelled, and that attacks of the Danes had to be repelled ; and their predatory expeditions by sea rendered it necessary to create a fleet. The danger which threatened the empire from the north did not escape the keen eye of Charlemagne, though he was unable to discover the means of averting it. The long eastern frontier occupied by Slavonic tribes also required constant vigilance, until in the end all of them, from the faithful Abodritae down to the Slavonians inhabiting Istria on the Adriatic, acknowledged, at least outwardly, the supremacy of the emperor. In Italy, also, constant disputes occurred on the frontiers between Charlemagne's dominions and those of the Byzantine empire, on the Venetian coast, and in the neighbourhood of Beneventum, until at last, in 810, a peace was concluded with the Byzantine court, in which Istria, Libernia, and Dalmatia, with the exception of the sea-coast, were ceded to Charlemagne. The peace of Aquitaine was disturbed by the Basques, who were only nominally subject to the empire, and the Spanish March was constantly exposed to the inroads of the Arabs, although Charlemagne, as early as 781, had appointed his youngest son Louis king of his possessions in Spain. The interior of the empire was little affected by these wars on the frontiers, for in most

cases the border provinces themselves were enabled, by their military organization, to furnish the troops for their own defence. These provinces called *Marches* had to some extent existed even under the Merovingian kings, but their organization was much improved by Charlemagne, and the empire was surrounded on the north and east by a complete circle of them,—on the Eider, the Elbe, the Saale, and southward as far as the Adriatic, while others existed in Italy, Spain, and Brittany, the inhabitants of this last province showing a constant disposition to revolt. Each of these *Marches* was strengthened by a perfect system of fortifications. There were only few cases in which it was necessary to levy the forces of the whole empire for the purpose of protecting the frontiers, a measure which always exercised a depressing influence upon the growing prosperity of its subjects, and generally threw a power into the hands of the chiefs of counties which was injurious to the central authority.

8. Even Eginhard, Charlemagne's private secretary and biographer, knew no particulars about his early life and education ; but although, in accordance with the spirit of the times, he had been more particularly trained in arms, it may be assumed as an indubitable fact, that a deep and warm attachment to the church was fostered in his heart from his earliest days by the members of his family. A knowledge of Latin was indispensable to him as the ruler of the Romanized Gauls, and he spoke it as fluently as his mother tongue. Greek he did not attempt till a late period of his life, and it is said that he had more difficulty in speaking than understanding it. Notwithstanding his restless activity in conducting his numerous wars, his taste for and appreciation of intellectual culture were ever increasing ; and he liked to be surrounded by the most learned men of the age, from whom he endeavoured to learn even to the latest period of his life. Peter of Pisa taught him grammar, and Alcuin afterwards rhetoric and dialectics ; the latter also succeeded in interesting him in astronomy, to which he subsequently

devoted much time. The art of writing was little practised during that period, and this accounts for the fact, that even as an old man he endeavoured to improve his handwriting. There can be no doubt that the learned Pope Hadrian I., with whom Charlemagne lived on most friendly terms ever since his accession, exercised considerable influence in awakening in him a thirst for knowledge. It was at Rome that, in 781, he became acquainted with the Anglo-Saxon Alcuin, whom seven years later he induced, by pressing invitations, to give up the direction of his great school at York, in which the most eminent scholars and the most zealous missionaries were trained, and to take up his residence in the Frankish dominions. But even before this time he had been in correspondence with him, and availed himself of his counsel in regulating the affairs of the church and state, but more particularly in the establishment and organization of schools. When Alcuin had advanced beyond the age of sixty, he withdrew to the convent of St. Martin at Tours, where he died in the year 800. About 782, the Lombard historian, Paulus Diaconus, who, ever since the subjugation of his countrymen, had lived in retirement in the monastery of Monte Cassino, appears to have entered into close connexion with Charlemagne. The friendship was brought about by an elegy which Paulus Diaconus addressed to the king in behalf of a brother, who was imprisoned for having been involved in an insurrectionary movement of the Lombards. In the year 783 we find him at the king's court, inspiring him with a love for the study of Greek, in consequence of which Charlemagne urged upon his clergy the necessity of making themselves acquainted with the original text of the Scriptures and with the Greek fathers.

The great qualities which Charlemagne displayed as a conqueror and a ruler are somewhat obscured by his domestic and matrimonial life. He had no less than nine wives, most of whom he divorced with very little ceremony; three died during

his lifetime ; he was longest married to Fastrada, who seems to have exercised an undue influence over him, and by whom he had two daughters. During the later period of his life he lived with concubines. He was extremely temperate both in eating and drinking, and especially fond of bodily exercises. He himself superintended the education of his children, and caused his daughters as well as his sons to be what was then considered liberally educated. In regard to his daughters, Charlemagne brought upon himself many unpleasantnesses, because in his excessive affection for them he would not allow them to marry, and intended to keep them about his person until his death. They accordingly formed clandestine connections, and his second daughter, Bertha, became the mother of two illegitimate sons by Angilbert.

9. The more intimately Charlemagne became acquainted with the ancient Christian civilisation of Gaul and Italy, the more he endeavoured to diffuse its elements through all the parts of his empire ; but he was prudent enough to perceive that the foundation of the political institutions of the empire was of a Germanic character, and that he ought not venture to enter upon a crusade against the national predilections of his German subjects. It would have been impossible, for example, to force them to adopt the language and customs of those who had once been the subjects of the Roman empire, for even after the restoration of that empire, the Frankish dominions were very much like an association of several distinct nationalities, every one of which was so much the equal of any of the rest that, as the sequel will show, even the sovereignty itself might pass from the Franks to other kindred tribes. The Germanic nations subdued by Charlemagne retained their own laws, just as the Gauls in former times had been allowed by the Merovingians to retain theirs ; and in this manner a national self-government was to some extent secured to the several Germanic nations. Still, however, these laws were constantly modified and increased by imperial

enactments (*capitulariū*), made by the king with the assistance of his nobles and bishops. These capitularies were intended gradually to form a body of laws for all parts of the empire.

The whole empire was divided into counties, each being presided over by a count appointed by the king and intrusted with the entire civil and military administration. On the frontiers, requiring a greater concentration of power, several counties were united into a March and placed under the administration of a single "count of the border" or marchgrave (*marquis*). The institution of these counts appointed by the king contributed greatly towards the consolidation of the empire, but at the same time gave to the king an influence in the local affairs of every county which was not always compatible with self-government, and the empire assumed more and more the character of an absolute monarchy. Very different was this state of things from that established among the Anglo-Saxons, where the ealdormen elected by the people formed a salutary counterpoise to the officers of the crown, and thus prevented the development of the exclusive monarchical principle.

But what endangered the liberty of the Frankish subjects still more, was the fact that the empire was essentially a conquering state, and had become so more particularly in the reign of Charlemagne. Military institutions lay at the bottom of the whole fabric, and according to the old Germanic principle all freemen were bound to serve the king in war. As the king had to call them out so frequently, the practice was felt by all freemen as a severe encroachment upon both their personal freedom and their material prosperity. According to a capitulary of the year 803, every freeman possessing either an independent estate or holding a fief of four acres (*mansi*), was obliged to equip himself and accompany his feudal lord (*senior*), or the count, on his military expeditions; whoever possessed less than three *mansi*, was obliged to unite with others who also had less, and with their assistance equip one

man for military service. Later capitularies, of the years 807 and 811, are still more stringent in exacting military duties, and from them we learn what acts of oppression were resorted to by the feudal lords and counts, and how freemen were often forced to change their own estates into fiefs in order to escape from military service. In this manner the military institutions of the empire tended to diminish the number of freemen, to drive them into the relation of vassals, and thereby constantly to increase the power and influence of the feudal lords, who ever since the time of Pepin had more and more taken the place of the old Frankish aristocracy.

The ecclesiastical aristocracy or hierarchy was raised by Charlemagne to greater importance than it had ever attained before. In his relation to the church he adopted the same principles as his predecessors ; whatever he did in this respect was never a mere isolated act, but part of a system which he seems to have elaborated in his own mind. Like his ancestors, he displayed his piety by splendid gifts and great reverence towards the ministers of religion and their churches. There was scarcely one important church or convent within his vast dominions, which had not in some way or other experienced the liberality of Charlemagne ; in many instances he contrived to restore to the churches the property which had been taken from them in times of disturbance and anarchy ; but he could not do much in this respect, for many of those estates, though they had been taken from the church only on the pretext that it was but for a time, had become permanently secularized, and had been given as fiefs to the secular nobility. At the same time, however, he took care to prevent the feudal aristocracy and the officers of the crown from making any further encroachments upon the property of the church.

All such measures affected the church only in its worldly prosperity ; but as he also considered himself entitled, nay, in duty bound, to watch over its internal welfare, he exer-

cised an influence which could not but come into collision with the legitimate functions of the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries. Thus he restored to the communities the power of electing their pastors, reserving to himself the right of sanctioning or cancelling the election ; and the laws of the empire enjoined everywhere the payment of tithes for the maintenance of the clergy. He kept a watchful eye upon the discipline and morality of the clergy, as well as upon their theoretical and practical training for their office ; he even interfered in regulating the institutions and dogmas of the church, being guided by the idea that the clergy of his empire should give their assistance in developing the state and educating the people, and in their own conduct set an example to all. So long as the church of its own accord pursued this honourable course, he allowed it to act with full independence ; but whenever he perceived that it was wanting in goodwill, power, or intelligence, he thought it right to interpose his own authority in pointing out what he considered the right way or in removing obstacles. The Frankish church of that period felt too much gratitude and reverence for the great hero to offer any obstinate resistance, either on principle or otherwise, to his regal or imperial authority, although in reality his conduct was a practical denial of the independence of the church. It seems to have been the general conviction that the supreme management of ecclesiastical affairs could not be in better hands, and the church acquiesced in it without troubling itself much about the consequences for the future. Even the Bishop of Rome, whom Charlemagne declared to be the first ecclesiastical dignitary of the empire, submitted to his views, and was content to regard himself as the second authority, for he felt that the emperor was not likely ever to act in opposition to his expressed opinion. In accordance with these views, Charlemagne naturally took a lively interest in the great questions which in his reign agitated the western and the eastern Churches, and that not as an ordinary

layman, but taking an active part in them as the lawful head of western Christendom. Thus a dispute originating in Spain about the nature of Christ, who was said to stand to the Father in the relation of an adopted son and not in any supernatural connexion, was creating considerable sensation in the church. Charlemagne and his learned friends among the clergy soon came to the conclusion that this doctrine was identical with the Nestorian heresy, and the general synod of the Frankish church, assembled at Frankfort in 794 and presided over by Charlemagne himself, solemnly rejected the doctrine as heretical. In like manner, the decree of the eastern council in favour of the use of images in places of worship, was declared to be without authority, although it had obtained the papal sanction, and neither Hadrian III. nor his successor Leo III. ventured to oppose Charlemagne, though his views were not those generally entertained at Rome. The Pope was thus placed in the singular position of agreeing with the eastern Church against Charlemagne on a point which more than any other contributed to produce a schism between the two churches. But notwithstanding all this, neither the Pope nor the clergy thought it advisable to oppose the expressed opinions of Charlemagne; they contrived, on the contrary, to avoid a conflict by prudent and diplomatic concessions.

As he claimed the supremacy in all ecclesiastical matters, so he made every effort to bring about a close union between the church and the state; for which reason he permitted the higher clergy to take as prominent a part in the councils of the imperial diet as the feudal nobles. Circumstances obliged him to hold such a diet at some convenient place almost every year, generally in the spring, before the opening of a campaign. The diet was attended by the great nobles of the empire, both clerical and secular, and without their consent no war could be carried on nor any material change effected in the laws. A second meeting, frequently held in the autumn,

had more the character of a state council, to which Charlemagne summoned such illustrious personages as enjoyed his special confidence, either for the purpose of settling some urgent business, or of preparing the measures to be laid before the spring diet. When any change was made in the laws affecting one particular nation, such as the Saxons, Frisians, Bavarians, &c., the ancient custom was to summon that nation and obtain its sanction ; but as the powers of the diet increased those of the people were diminished, and in the end the popular meeting was convened only for the purpose of receiving information about the changes that had been introduced.

One of the chief features of Charlemagne's legislation is the increasing severity by which he strove to establish peace and order in his empire, and to prevent rude violence by which an injured party often tried to avenge himself on the offender. By this severity the power of the monarch, supported as it was by the hierarchy, rose in the same proportion in which popular freedom was repressed. It was in accordance with the same spirit that the administration of public affairs and of justice was more and more withdrawn from popular bodies and transferred to the sovereign and his officials, secular as well as clerical. One very important class of officials were the *missi regis*, who, in the name of the king, had to watch over the political and ecclesiastical institutions of the empire ; two of them, one a layman and the other a priest, were appointed for each county, through which they had to travel, and where they had to convene quarterly county meetings, for the purpose of regulating the levies, making inquiries into the administration of justice, and receiving the complaints of the oppressed. This institution of the *missi regis*, however, did not become fully established until the reign of Louis, the successor of Charlemagne. The expenses of the government were levied almost exclusively on landed property, ecclesiastical as well as secular, for the proceeds from the tolls and of a tax called *census regalis*, which

was levied throughout the empire, do not appear to have been very large.

Charlemagne's greatness as a ruler was most strikingly displayed in what he did for the education of the people and for the civilisation of his Germanic subjects. This was, of course, an undertaking which required much time, and he himself could do little more than lay the foundation. Regarding the church as the vehicle of Roman and Christian civilisation, he not only endeavoured to withdraw from her those influences which might lead her astray from the great task she had to accomplish, but he exerted himself to secure good, able, and learned men for the priesthood. Accordingly, like his father Pepin, he vigorously set himself against the practice of selling ecclesiastical offices (simony), which had become customary at the time when the church acquired large worldly possessions, and had continued to increase ever since. In like manner he enacted that the clergy should carry no arms, and should not hunt or take any active part in war ; they were repeatedly exhorted to live according to their laws, and to study the Scriptures and the Fathers ; and the bishops were commanded to visit their dioceses and instruct their flocks. To improve public worship he invited organists and singers from Italy, and in order to train good and able pastors he caused several learned schools to be established in various parts of the empire on the model of those of the Anglo-Saxons. The most celebrated of these was the one founded by Alcuin at Tours in 793. A visit to the monastery of Monte Cassino, in 787, had awakened in Charlemagne a desire to improve the monastic institutions of his kingdom by introducing the rules of the Benedictines. It was part of these improvements that generally a school was connected with every monastery, in which the monks had to take care of the religious instruction, while some secular official was commanded to expound to the pupils the laws of the kingdom. His piety prompted him to exert himself also for those Christians who

lived in distant countries under the government of non-Christian rulers. Thus he entered into negotiations with the Caliph Harun al Rashid, who not only permitted Charlemagne's ambassadors to visit the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, but placed it under his supremacy. His intercourse with that celebrated caliph, a munificent patron of science and art, seems to have contributed not a little towards promoting intellectual culture in Europe, which was then far outstripped by the Arabs in many departments of knowledge. Notwithstanding several unavoidable disputes, Charlemagne also kept up a friendly intercourse with the court of Constantinople, and it seems that the Emperor Michael formally recognised him as Emperor of the West, though the subsequent sovereigns of the East did not always consider this precedent as binding on themselves. Charlemagne was equally desirous to maintain peace with other distant nations, and to prevent any unnecessary disturbance of the established order of things. With this view he endeavoured to increase and strengthen his influence with the Christian kings in Spain and Britain, allying himself with the former against the Arabs, and with the latter against the piratical Normans, and being fully aware that the Arabs and Normans might become very dangerous to his own empire, he sought to strengthen himself against them by building fleets in the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

How much he was concerned about promoting the material welfare of his people by agriculture and commerce, is clear from the minuteness with which he regulated the management of his own estates. Commerce, in particular, was encouraged by the foundation of commercial towns and entrepôts, by the institution of annual fairs, by making or improving high roads, and by the reduction of oppressive tolls.

Charlemagne died on the 28th of January 814, at the age of seventy-two. Considering the times in which he lived, it must be owned that he was an extraordinary man ; but he pre-

sents at the same time a singular combination of barbarous ferocity with elevated views of national improvement. "Perhaps," says Mr. Hallam, "his greatest eulogy is written in the disgraces of succeeding times and the miseries of Europe. He stands alone, like a beacon upon a waste, or a rock in the broad ocean. His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses, which could not be drawn by any weaker hand."

As early as the year 781, Charlemagne, during a visit to Rome, had made arrangements respecting the succession and the division of the empire, although Charles, the eldest of his three sons, was then scarcely ten years old. The pope consecrated Louis, the youngest, king of Aquitaine, and Pepin king of Lombardy, the eldest being at the same time appointed the colleague of his father. In the year 806 Charlemagne made other arrangements, and Eginhard took the document containing them to Rome, where it was intrusted to Pope Leo. This document, which is still extant, does not contain any expressed desire to maintain the unity of the empire; it is, on the contrary, distinctly stipulated that each of the three sons should be content with the portion assigned to him. Still, however, the mere fact that the eldest son was to receive the largest dominion, eastern Gaul and nearly all the purely Germanic countries, seems to show that Charlemagne looked upon that portion as the most essential part of the empire, and upon Italy as a mere dependency. The document further ordains, that, if any of the brothers should die without issue, the two survivors should divide his portion between them; but if he should leave a son acceptable to the people, his uncles should not oppose him. Charles died in 810 without issue, and in the following year Pepin also died, leaving behind an illegitimate son, Bernard, who succeeded him in Italy. In 813, when Charlemagne felt that he could not survive much longer, he summoned his only surviving son Louis from Aquitaine to a diet at Aix-la-Chapelle. He there put to the assembled nobles

the question, whether they agreed to his transferring the imperial dignity to Louis; and when they unanimously declared this to be the will of God, Charlemagne, in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, ordered Louis to put the imperial crown on his head with his own hands.

CHAPTER II.

GRADUAL DECAY OF THE CARLOVINGIAN MONARCHY, AND CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.

1. Reign of Louis Debonnaire; 2. Lothaire and his brothers until the treaty of Verdun, 843; 3. Further divisions of the Frankish empire; 4. France under the last Carlovingsians; 5. The last Carlovingsians in Germany; 6. Italy during the Carlovingsian period; 7. The Normans and their expeditions.

1. LOUIS, commonly surnamed Debonnaire, and by Italian and German writers the Pious, possessed no qualifications for governing the empire to which he had succeeded; he had from his infancy shown a strong inclination to the study of religious books and to devotional exercises, though he also acquired a considerable knowledge of the poets of ancient Greece and Rome. During his father's lifetime he had governed Aquitaine with such gentleness and mildness, that his subjects are said to have actually rejoiced at having been conquered by the Franks, and his father is reported to have wept for joy at finding that greater order prevailed in Aquitaine than in any other province of his dominions. But however beneficent his sway may have been in Aquitaine, he was unable to discharge the more important duties of ruler over a large empire. So far as his knowledge is concerned, it may be admitted that he was an



March 10

Quincy

Albany

Reverend Sir,

Dear Sir,

excellent scholar, for besides the German and Romanic languages he spoke Latin with fluency, and understood Greek ; he was also well versed in the Scriptures, and in his later years confined himself entirely to their study and that of devotional works. Psalm-singing and reading the Bible had far greater charms for him than the occupation with state affairs, and to found or organize a convent gave him infinitely more pleasure than to take the command of his armies and protect the frontiers. Hence he generally left the management of public affairs to his counsellors and friends, and whoever of them happened to possess his confidence, might lead him in any way he pleased, and even induce him to commit acts which were otherwise repugnant to his feelings. He was not born to be a king, and as he himself felt this, he once resolved to imitate the example of other members of his family and withdraw into a convent, that he might be able to follow up his own inclinations. But his friends had still sufficient influence over him to prevent his taking this step.

At the time when he succeeded to the throne, the whole empire was apparently in such a state of tranquillity, that it seemed as if he had nothing to do but to give a general superintendence to the political machinery which his father had set in motion, to make a few improvements here and there, and to leave the rest to take care of itself. But the Carlovingian empire was not yet a fully organized mechanism, like the eastern empire ; the strength of the several nationalities which Charlemagne, in spite of their protestations, had contrived to unite together under his sceptre, was still sufficiently great to break the artificial machinery, as soon as it was felt that it was no longer held together by a strong arm. Louis in his own person presented the very model of a Christian sovereign, which it was his ambition to exhibit to his still half-pagan Germans and half-paganized Romans in Gaul and Italy ; he was really in earnest in his endeavours to establish peace,

justice, and a truly Christian life among his subjects ; but in these views he stood almost alone among his people. The clergy, though well trained for educating their flocks, pursued, with few exceptions, very different objects, being bent only upon enriching themselves by the liberality of the laity, and thereby making themselves independent of both the sovereign and the people ; and being met in these desires by the unbounded liberality of the emperor, they succeeded to their heart's content. The secular nobility also knew how to take advantage of the mild and gentle character of Louis, and soon discovered that he was not the man to check them with a high hand, however obstinate and insolent their conduct might be. The only means of keeping the unruly nobles in submission and obedience, Louis did not possess.

When Louis, after having filled the imperial throne scarcely four years, found himself thwarted in his design to withdraw into a monastery, he resolved, at a diet held at Aix-la-Chapelle in 817, upon a division of the empire among his three sons, though he was anxious not to destroy its unity, lest, as he himself expresses it in the document still extant, such a division should give rise to scandal in the church. It was accordingly decreed that his eldest son Lothaire should receive the imperial crown ; that Pepin, his second son, should undertake the administration of Aquitaine, the Spanish March, Burgundy, and a part of Septimania ; and that Louis, the youngest, should govern Bavaria, Carinthia, Bohemia, and the countries of the Avars and Slavonians in the east. All the other countries were to be under the direct government of the two emperors, father and son. In this arrangement Louis evidently intended to establish the right of primogeniture, for Lothaire is treated throughout as superior to his brothers, and without his consent no decision as to peace or war with the enemies of the empire could be come to. As to Italy, it was determined that it should be subject in every respect to the Emperor Lothaire. Lastly, the

people were requested, in case of Lothaire's dying without leaving an heir, to elect one of his surviving brothers as his successor in the empire, in order not to disturb its unity or the peace of the church.

The decree that Lothaire should inherit all the kingdoms of his father, together with the imperial dignity, excited discontent among the brothers ; but as yet only Bernard showed any open symptoms of disaffection. There had been at the court of Charlemagne a party, which, seeing the inability of Louis to govern, had endeavoured to secure the succession to the able and enterprising Bernard ; but the fact of his being an illegitimate prince had rendered that scheme impracticable, and it had been arranged that Bernard should govern Italy as the vassal of the emperor. Both he and his friends were now incensed at the treatment he experienced, and as he had not been invited to the diet of Aix-la-Chapelle, he refused to acknowledge its decisions. He caused his Lombard subjects to renew their oath of allegiance to him, and at once took possession of the Alpine passes. His personal enemies in Italy, the Count of Brescia and the Bishop of Verona, laid accusations against him before the emperor, and the energetic measures taken by the court of Louis rendered it impossible for Bernard to entertain any hope of success. He was obliged to appear before his imperial uncle, and at Christmas, in 817, implored his pardon. He was tried, and being convicted of high treason, the imperial counsellors ordered his eyes to be put out. Louis himself knew nothing of it, until three days later he learned that Bernard had died in consequence of this torture, whereupon he imposed upon himself heavy penances for having neglected his duties.

The feeble manner in which Louis governed his dominions gradually loosened the mechanism with which his father had united the heterogeneous elements of the empire. In 819 he married the beautiful Judith, a daughter of the Bavarian

count Guelph (his descendants still reign in Britain, Hanover, and Brunswick), who, in 823, bore him a son Charles (Charles the Bald). The father having divided the empire among the three sons by his first wife, became uneasy at having no portion to assign to the young prince. At last Lothaire promised to protect his stepbrother in whatever province his father might assign to him, and, accordingly, in 829, when the young prince was only six years old, Louis, by an imperial edict, made over to him Alemannia, Raetia, and a part of Burgundy. Lothaire, who does not appear to have been very honest in his promise, soon after called upon the whole people to assist him in restoring the legitimate order in the empire. Louis himself was attacked by his sons at Compiègne, and he and his young son Charles, being made prisoners, were kept in custody, with orders to prepare themselves for monastic life. But as the established order of the empire was becoming more and more disturbed, many of the leading men turned away from Lothaire ; and although the clergy were greatly exasperated at the violation of the arrangements made in 817 and sanctioned by solemn oaths, yet the monastic orders now sent a deputation to Louis asking him whether, in case of his restoration, he was willing to exert himself to strengthen the empire, and especially the church. Louis answered in the affirmative ; and one of the monks, under the pretext of some religious business, was sent to the princes Pepin and Louis, with instructions to try to gain them for the scheme of restoring their father, by the promise that their dominions should be increased. The plan succeeded, a diet was summoned to Aix-la-Chapelle in 831, and all the people again submitted to their old emperor. Lothaire was tried and found guilty of treason by his own friends ; his father, however, pardoned his misconduct, but confined his power to Italy and obliged him to promise not to undertake anything against his will. The Empress Judith had been the main-spring of action in all the movements that had been going on during the

last years, and her influence over her husband was so unbounded, that it was popularly believed she had bewitched him.

After the restoration of Louis, everything proceeded for a few years in the usual order ; but disputes with his sons broke out afresh in 833, in consequence of his attempting to take Aquitaine from Pepin and give it to his favourite son Charles, alleging that Pepin had contemplated a revolt. Louis of Bavaria supported Pepin, and both invited Lothaire to bring an armed force to their assistance. The armies of the two hostile parties met in the neighbourhood of Colmar. Pope Gregory IV. endeavoured to mediate, but during the negotiations the old emperor found himself gradually forsaken by nearly all his friends and followers, and calling out to the few still remaining faithful—"Go you too, and join my sons, for I do not wish any one to lose his life or be injured on my account," he fell into the hands of his sons. Lothaire kept his father in custody, sending his stepmother Judith to a convent in Italy, and her son Charles to another at Prüm. The old emperor was stripped of all his powers and compelled to do penance ; but the humiliation which Lothaire inflicted on his father, and the arrogance with which he again claimed the sovereign power over all the empire, aroused his brothers Pepin and Louis to liberate and restore their father. At length in the spring of 834, Lothaire set his father free, and though obliged to flee from his brothers, was again pardoned by his father and permitted to return to Italy.

After this second restoration, Louis governed his empire for several years in peace and with the advice of his usual counsellors. Twice he was induced, probably by Judith, who had returned to him, to attempt a new division of the empire in favour of Charles ; but in the end she and her friends came to the conviction that all their endeavours would be futile, unless they could secure for Charles the support of the brother whom the aged emperor had appointed his successor. It was

accordingly resolved that attempts should be made to win over Lothaire. The object was gained by the promise that all Lothaire's offences should be forgiven, and that the whole empire, with the exception of Bavaria, should be divided between him and Charles. Lothaire declared on oath that he was satisfied with this arrangement, and promised to give it his support. Accordingly the emperor at a diet at Worms, in 839, assigned all the countries on the south-west of the Meuse to Charles, and all the eastern provinces to Lothaire. Pepin had died shortly before this, and his sons were passed over in the new distribution. But a party in Aquitaine was bestirring itself in favour of the young princes, and Louis of Bavaria also tried to obtain larger dominions in Germany than had been set apart for him, and was supported in this attempt by the Thuringians and Saxons, with whom he entered Alemannia. But before these undertakings had led to any results, the Emperor Louis died on the 20th of June 840, on an island in the Rhine opposite to Ingelheim, leaving his empire in the greatest confusion.

2. After the death of their father, the exasperation among the brothers about the division of the empire became even more violent, for Lothaire, by virtue of the imperial dignity conferred upon him in 817, now claimed the sovereignty over the whole empire, promising to confirm all those in the possession of their fiefs who should be faithful and obedient to him. When, therefore, he marched northward across the Alps, vassals from all parts flocked to his standards. He first endeavoured to lull Charles into security by the promise that he would leave him undisturbed in his possessions, and then proceeded against Louis of Bavaria, to force him back within the same boundaries in which it had been the intention of his father to keep him ; but Louis, being supported by his Germans, and offering a manful resistance in the neighbourhood of Worms, compelled Lothaire to conclude an armistice. Lothaire was aided by a powerful party, especially among the clergy, who were actuated

by sordid and selfish motives, hoping to profit by his liberality, though at the same time they felt a natural interest in maintaining the unity of the empire, which offered the best security for the protection and authority of the church. Lothaire, however, availed himself of the armistice for attacking Charles, who was joined by nearly all the inhabitants of Gaul on the west of the Meuse, and who, although forsaken by many of his vassals, obliged Lothaire in the autumn of 840 to cede to him the provinces of Aquitaine, Septimania, Provence, and ten counties between the Loire and Seine.

Meanwhile Louis of Bavaria united all the German tribes on the east of the Rhine, but, encountering his brothers again in the neighbourhood of Worms in 841, his army was routed and he himself obliged to return to Bavaria. As Lothaire now renewed hostilities against Charles, the two younger brothers, being sure that he intended to deceive them both, united their forces against him. In the neighbourhood of Fontenaille, the allied brothers met the army of Lothaire towards the end of June. Before commencing the battle, Lothaire sent a message to them intimating that, although he was the lawful emperor and could not neglect the duties of his station, he would yet willingly consider their claims so far as they were compatible with his imperial rights. But the two brothers appealed to the decision of the sword, or, as they called it, of God Almighty ; and on the next day, the 25th of June, the bloody battle of Fontenaille was fought, in which Lothaire was defeated, though both parties had struggled manfully and sustained great losses. The allied brothers with their friends were the more rejoiced at this success, because they regarded it as vouchsafed to them by the Deity ; but at the same time they thought it necessary to take every precaution to secure their dominions. A report spread by Lothaire that Charles had fallen in the battle was not without serious consequences ; but Charles neutralized them by travelling through his dominions, receiving everywhere fresh

proofs of the attachment of his vassals ; while Lothaire, turning eastward, cunningly endeavoured to foster the elements of discord still existing among the Germans. In the country of the Saxons in particular, there was a party still attached to paganism and the ancient relations under which they had lived before their subjugation ; these Lothaire endeavoured to win over by liberal concessions. Charles was determined to keep up his alliance with Louis, and after various undertakings and attempts at negotiation, the two brothers with their armies met in the neighbourhood of Strasburg, on the 20th of February 842. Each addressed his army, Louis in German (*lingua Teudisca*), and Charles in French (*lingua Romana*), which was then only just developing. After having assured each other by a solemn oath, the brothers marched towards Aix-la-Chapelle, where Lothaire loved to exhibit himself in his imperial dignity. Being taken by surprise, he took to flight, and his brothers summoned an assembly of priests and bishops to decide upon his fate. All declared unanimously that by his faithless conduct Lothaire had forfeited his rights ; and when the brothers promised to comply with the request of the bishops, they were called upon, in the name of God, to undertake the administration of the empire.

Lothaire was thus, by a solemn act of the church, excluded from his dominions, which were handed over to his brothers ; but as he still retained his possessions in Italy, they agreed upon dividing only the parts of the empire on the north side of the Alps, in which division special regard was to be had to national affinities, so as to keep together under the same ruler those countries in which the same language was spoken. How the boundary lines were drawn, is not quite certain, but it seems that all the countries to the east of the Meuse, where the German language prevailed, were assigned to Louis, while Charles obtained the western or Romanized provinces. Lothaire, who was left undisturbed in his Italian possessions, continued his

endeavours to increase them in any way he was able to devise. At first he renewed his intrigues with the Saxons. Among them a party, called the Stellinga, was formed, and the pagan Danes were gained over by Lothaire to support it. The Stellinga was joined by the frilingi (freemen) and lazzi (serfs), whose object was to restore the national laws of the Saxons, such as they had been before their subjugation by Charlemagne. The opposition was at first ostensibly directed against the Frankish nobles (edhilingi) settled among the Saxons, and there was danger, lest the whole nation should revolt against the empire and cast off Christianity.

At the same time, however, Lothaire also tried fresh negotiations with his brothers. An embassy of his, which had an interview with them at Mussy on the Seine, again reminded them of the rights he possessed by virtue of his imperial dignity ; but he humbly acknowledged his former errors, and promised to be satisfied with one-third of the empire. When the two brothers, with the consent, it is said, of all the people, deliberated about the matter with the nobles, it was resolved again to lay the whole question about the division of the empire before an assembly of the bishops and priests. The deputies at this meeting were unanimous in demanding the restoration of peace, and the two brothers ceded to Lothaire Lombardy and all the country west of the Raetian Alps and the Rhine as far as the Rhone, Saône, and the Ardennes. Louis had enough to do in quelling the mutinous spirit of the Stellinga in Saxony ; and while he was thus engaged, Lothaire, renewing his plots, contrived to prevent the commissioners, intrusted with the division of the empire, from making the necessary preparations. The final decision was thus delayed until the fearful sufferings brought upon the people by the severity of the winter of 842-43 created an irresistible desire for peace. At length, in the month of August 843, after many discussions and deliberations, an agreement was come to

at Verdun, by which a permanent division of the Frankish empire into three parts was established.

We do not possess the document of the treaty of Verdun, but its main provisions are mentioned by several chroniclers, and from them we learn that the division was essentially the same as that agreed upon at Mussy, viz. :—That Lothaire obtained Italy and the countries extending from the Mediterranean to the North Sea, between the Rhine, on the one hand, and the Rhone, Saône, and Meuse, on the other. Louis received the German provinces on the east of the Rhine; but on the west side of the river, Lothaire had to cede to him Mayence, Speier, and Worms, as a compensation for which Lothaire obtained the whole of Friesland. All the countries to the west of Lothaire's portion belonged to Charles, including Aquitaine and the Spanish March, the connexion of which with the Frankish empire was already becoming very loose. The treaty of Verdun thus laid the foundation of the independence of both France and Germany, and each of the two kingdoms was based on its own distinct nationality; such, however, was not the case with the portion of Lothaire, for it was not based on any one nationality, nor did it form a compact country inclosed by natural boundaries, but contained in itself the germs of a speedy dissolution. Lothaire, of course, retained the title of emperor, though it does not appear to have been specially recognised in the treaty, and he manifestly entertained the hope of soon finding an opportunity for re-establishing his authority throughout the ancient empire.

3. According to the Germanic law of succession, the division of the empire might be carried even much further, and we shall see in the sequel how this principle was actually followed. The imperial dignity was for a long time no more than an empty title without any real basis. Notwithstanding several disputes which arose from time to time among the sons of Louis Debonnaire, peace was on the whole maintained, chiefly in con-

sequence of dangers which threatened them from without. In 851, they concluded a treaty at Mersen near Maestricht, in which they promised one another friendship and support against their enemies ; but the document of this treaty, which is preserved entire, does not recognise the imperial authority of Lothaire, and the three brothers treat on terms of perfect equality.

The portion of Lothaire, embracing as it did northern Italy, a part of Gaul, and another of Germany, in one sense still represented the Frankish empire of Charlemagne ; but accidental circumstances, combined with other causes, soon brought about its dissolution. Lothaire, whose reign extended to 855, certainly did exercise his imperial influence upon the elections to the papal see ; and at his request Pope Sergius II., in 844, anointed his eldest son Louis (II.) king of Italy, and Pope Leo IV. afterwards conferred on him the imperial crown. In 855, Lothaire feeling his end approaching, surrendered to his second son, Lothaire II., the northern part of his dominions, which was subsequently called after him, Lotharingia (Lorraine), together with Friesland, while his third son, Charles, who was still a boy, received Provence. Six days after the completion of these arrangements, Lothaire died in a convent at Prüm near Trêves, to which he had retired for the purpose of doing penance for his sins. Charles would have been deprived of his portion by his brothers had he not been protected by the great nobles ; but as he died in 863, Louis II. and Lothaire II. divided Provence in such a manner that each received the half nearest to his own dominion. In 869, Lothaire II. died ; the most important act of his reign was, that by arbitrarily divorcing his wife Teutberga, which was sanctioned by the bishops of Cologne and Trêves, he had afforded to Pope Nicholas I. an opportunity of acquiring supreme judicial power over the bishops.

Charles the Bald, with the assistance of the clergy, contrived

to gain possession of Lorraine ; but even the year after, 870, he was obliged in a treaty, concluded at Mersen, to share the spoil with Louis of Bavaria, also surnamed the German. In this division the greater part of Lorraine, that is, the country on the east of the Meuse, the Ourthe, and the sources of the Saône, was ceded to Louis, and thus became part of Germany. When at last, in 875, Louis II. died, Charles the Bald hastened to take possession of Italy, where he met with great support among the nobles against his more powerful brother, Louis the German, whose son, Carloman, he contrived to induce by cunning negotiations to evacuate Italy. The result of this successful manœuvre was, that in 876, Pope John VIII. placed the imperial crown on the head of Charles the Bald, who also succeeded in acquiring the half of Provence which had been assigned to Louis the German. As the countries which had constituted the empire of Lothaire I. did not form a natural unity, their inhabitants did not even attempt to prevent their separation. Hence the imperial dignity, whose claims to the general sovereignty were gradually forgotten after the extinction of the oldest branch of the Carlovingians, was arbitrarily bestowed by the popes on the French king, together with the possession of Italy ; but the power of the French monarch, as we shall see hereafter, was unable to maintain his sovereignty over the German portion of the empire.

At the time of the death of Louis Debonnaire, the dominion of Charles the Bald was the weakest and most insecure part of the empire. His father had given away most of his domains in that part to the clergy and the nobles ; the Spanish March, with the aid of the Saracens, was making itself more and more independent under its own counts ; the Armoricans, and the inhabitants of Brittany, who had always enjoyed a high degree of independence under princes of their own, now succeeded, at least for a time, in making themselves perfectly free ; and in Aquitaine, lastly, Charles had to carry on a protracted war

against the sons of his deceased brother Pepin. The nobles were prevailed upon to assist their sovereign in these wars and those against the roving Normans only by large concessions being made to them both individually and as a body. Charles disappointed the hopes which had been entertained of him in his earlier days, and, in order to maintain himself in his position, granted to the nobles two privileges which seriously injured the throne itself: the one gave them the right to elect the king, and the other changed the fiefs into hereditary domains. This condition of Brittany and Aquitaine emboldened the Normans to direct their expeditions more particularly against the coasts of France, and Charles the Bald was obliged to purchase their departure with large sums of money, which only enticed them to repeat their adventures. By these and similar measures he brought contempt on himself; notwithstanding his extraordinary concessions, he was unable to control the lawless conduct of his vassals, who in 858 sent envoys to Louis the German, soliciting his assistance, as otherwise they would be obliged to join the heathens against their own king. Louis at once obeyed the call, and took possession of Charles's dominions; but in the year following (859), Charles, with the assistance of the Burgundians, to whom he represented Louis as a foreigner unfit to rule over Gaul, succeeded in driving him across the frontier. In 860, a peace was concluded between the brothers, in which neither was very honest, for each was only waiting for an opportunity of gaining the whole empire for himself. Charles availed himself of the confusion prevailing in the dominions of Lothaire, whose house was becoming extinct, to take possession of Provence, and even to obtain the imperial crown. He was successful in both, though his elder brother, Louis the German, had by his age a better title to the imperial crown. But Charles was neither able to maintain himself in Italy, nor to defend Gaul against the inroads of the Normans. Two years after his elevation to the imperial throne, in 877,

he died on his return from Italy, where the great nobles, in conjunction with Carloman, had risen against him. He had been enabled to pacify them only by making concessions similar to those he had been obliged to grant in France. When quitting Italy, he had left his brother-in-law, Count Buoso of Vienne, as governor of the country; but when the news of Charles's death was brought to Italy, Buoso was expelled by the hostile faction. Pope John VIII., however, endeavoured to support the French party in Italy, by founding the New-Burgundian kingdom in the countries about the Rhone, and placing Buoso upon its throne. This object was gained only by making extraordinary concessions to the bishops in those parts which were called upon to recognise him as their king. Buoso maintained himself on his throne until his death in 887.

Two years before the death of Charles the Bald, a diet of the French nobles had recognised his son, Louis the Stammerer, as his successor; being afterwards crowned by the pope, he sanctioned the division of Lorraine made between his father and Louis the German, but died in 879, before he was able to make good his claims to Italy. Ere a successor could be appointed, a party invited a son of Louis the German; but as the majority of the nobles disliked him on account of his foreign origin, they induced him to give up his claims by ceding to him the portion of Lorraine which had belonged to Charles the Bald. While Buoso was crowned at Lyons by the bishops as king of Burgundy, and the two sons of Louis the Stammerer, Louis III. and Carloman, were anointed as kings, Charles the Fat, the youngest son of Louis the German, was subduing Lombardy. In 880, the French nobles brought about a treaty by which France was divided between Louis III. and Carloman, in such a manner that the former obtained the northern provinces, and the latter Burgundy and Aquitaine. In their endeavours to carry this division into effect, they were supported by the German branch of the Carlovingians against Buoso,

whom they treated as a usurper. But Buoso, though he was kept within the bounds of his newly-constituted kingdom, maintained himself as king of Burgundy ; for in the same year Carloman, the brother of Charles the Fat, died, and the latter, giving up the war against Buoso, proceeded to Rome to obtain the imperial crown, while Louis III. was obliged to turn his arms against the Normans. After the death of Louis III., in 882, his brother Carloman united western France under his sceptre, but after having first beaten the Normans, and then purchased their departure, he too died, in 884, without leaving a suitable heir to his throne, for his only son Charles, afterwards surnamed the Simple, was a mere infant. The French nobles now summoned from Germany Charles the Fat, who had been crowned emperor by the pope in 881, and at the same time possessed the sovereignty over all Germany. This monarch thus once more united the whole of the Frankish empire with the exception of Burgundy, which was governed by Buoso as an independent kingdom.

Louis the German displayed greater vigour than either of his brothers, especially against the Slavonians, who threatened the eastern frontier of his kingdom, and against the Normans. He was on the whole victorious, and certainly more successful against the Normans than were the kings of France. But as the navy founded by Charlemagne had been allowed to decay, the coasts and countries about the mouths of the rivers were more and more exposed to ravages : the country between the Eider and the Elbe was conquered by the Normans, and Hamburgh, which had become the metropolis of the north, was taken and destroyed by them. We have already seen how Louis's attempt to conquer France proved unsuccessful, and how at the same time the treaty of Mersen secured to him a portion of Lorraine, the whole of which became united with Germany under his sons. When he died, in 876, his three sons divided his kingdom in such a manner, that Carlo-

man obtained Bavaria and the countries to the east of it, while Louis the younger received the northern parts, including Saxony and Lorraine, and Charles the Fat, Alemannia. Louis, after the death of Louis the Stammerer, even attempted to make himself master of France, for on the death of his brother Carloman, in 880, he had obtained possession of his kingdom of Bavaria, though he had been obliged to leave to his brother Arnulf, an illegitimate son of Carloman, the country called Carinthia. Charles the Fat, on the other hand, obtained the imperial crown in 881, which Carloman had aimed at in vain. After the death of his brother Louis, in 882, Charles the Fat united all Germany, and as two years later he was also called upon to assume the crown of France, the greater part of the Carlovingian empire was, as we have already seen, once more united under one head, and remained so until the year 887.

The imperial title, possessed by Charles the Fat, was of no importance whatever, for he was too feeble even to keep order within his Frankish dominions, however ready the nobles were to support him ; much less was he in a condition to exercise any influence upon Italy or the church. The different nationalities of which the empire was composed were beginning to develop each its own individuality, and to separate from each other, so that even a stronger arm than that of Charles would scarcely have sufficed to keep them together and united. He was unable to repel the inroads of the Normans, who now renewed their expeditions more frequently and in greater numbers, and ravaged and destroyed Cologne, Bonn, Trèves, and all the larger towns of northern Lorraine. Nothing could check their inroads. On one occasion, in 886, when the Normans had conquered Rouen and were besieging Paris with seven hundred ships, Charles, whose assistance was implored against the barbarians, acted with unpardonable sloth ; and when at last he did arrive, he purchased their peace by paying a large sum of money and giving up the surrounding country to plunder. His conduct, how-

ever, was partly owing to bodily infirmity, for he suffered much from severe headaches, which in the end seem to have destroyed his mind, so that he fancied himself possessed by the devil, and caused himself to be exorcised by the priests. Such conduct roused the contempt of all classes among his subjects ; and when in the autumn of 887 he was holding a diet at Tribur, near Darmstadt, the brave Arnulf of Carinthia advanced with an army of barbarians and Slavonians against him. As Charles was at once abandoned by all his friends, Arnulf was proclaimed king ; and Charles, who received some estates in Alemannia, where he was to spend the remainder of his life, died in the following year, 888.

The example set in Germany was followed in France in the beginning of the very same year, for the French nobles chose Odo, Count of Paris (a grandson of Louis Debonnaire), for their king. He owed his elevation mainly to the influence of the clergy, whom he rewarded by confirming all the rights and privileges they had previously acquired. Both Germany and France thus still clung to the descendants of the Carlovingian race, although the two countries were thenceforth more decidedly and permanently separated from each other, and pursued each its own career of development. In France the Carolingians continued to reign until 987, the last being Louis v., while in Germany the race became extinct in 918.

The kingdom of Burgundy, founded by Buoso in 879, was the third independent monarchy that had been formed out of the Frankish empire on the north of the Alps. At the death of Charles the Fat, a party headed by Conrad, a grandson of Louis the German, intended to raise Charles's natural son to the throne ; but the scheme was frustrated by Arnulf. Conrad was intrusted with the administration of the counties between the Alps and Mount Jura ; but his son Rudolph assumed the title of king over the same territory which his father had governed as duke. Arnulf recognised the usurper in his new dignity ; and as the

little kingdom consisted almost entirely of ancient Burgundian countries, it received the name of Upper Burgundy (the French portion of modern Switzerland), to distinguish it from the kingdom of Buoso. Rudolph died in 911, and his successor Rudolph II., in 934, united the kingdom founded by Buoso with his own under the general name of Burgundy.

4. Odo, Count of Paris, reigned from 888 to 898. At the time of his elevation, Charles the Simple was only nine years old, and was for the present passed over as too young. Odo had to contend with so many difficulties in keeping the French nobles in subjection, that it was impossible for him to check the ever repeated inroads of the Normans. When Charles the Simple had reached his fourteenth year, the Carlovingian party proclaimed him king against Odo, who readily concluded a treaty with him, in which he gave up the kingdom, and died soon after.

Charles IV., or the Simple (898-929), found himself obliged by the many struggles he had to maintain against enemies within his own kingdom, to enlist the services of one of the most formidable leaders of the Norman pirates. This man was Rollo, the son of a Danish prince, who had long been the terror of France. In 911, Charles sent envoys to him to say that, if he would become a Christian and promise to keep peace, he would cede to him a portion of his kingdom, and give him the hand of his daughter. Rollo and his well-organized bands accepted the offer, for the instinctive desire felt by all Germanic tribes to acquire fixed habitations in some foreign country, had not yet become extinct in those bold and adventurous warriors. Rollo thus received the country about the lower Seine, from the Epte to the sea, which was henceforth called Normandy, as a fief of the French king, and along with it the feudal supremacy of the province of Brittany. Rollo had, of course, to take the oath of allegiance as a vassal of Charles, and at his baptism he received the name of Robert from a brother of Odo. The

settlement of these Norman marauders in France was soon followed by the complete liberation of the country from the ravages with which it had been visited during the last hundred years. Robert's vigorous administration speedily effaced all traces of the previous devastations in the country under his sway ; he admitted many new-comers from Scandinavia, as well as Frenchmen, who wished to settle in his dominions ; and the Normans, who had not been accompanied by many women from their own country, freely married French wives, and by this means soon acquired both the French language and French manners. The Norman warriors received lands from their chief as fiefs, for the country contained extensive tracts of unappropriated land, and thus formed a compact body of a military and landed aristocracy in the midst of the French population, which was scattered around in towns and villages.

The settlement of this Germanic people, who were enterprising and withal thoughtful, exercised a healthy and invigorating influence not only on France, but far beyond its boundaries. The spirit of independence with which Robert acted from the very beginning, stirred up other great nobles to put forward similar claims ; some had already been in the habit of acting quite independently of the king. Things had in fact gone so far, that the crown domains had become insignificant in comparison with the vast territories accumulated in the hands of the great nobles, especially since the time when the men who had once been mere officers of the crown, as counts and dukes, began to regard their powers no longer as delegated only for a time, but as hereditary feudal rights. In the time of Charlemagne and his immediate successors, none of the nobles would have dreamt of advancing such claims, though even in the reign of Louis Debonnaire attempts were made by the nobles to make their offices hereditary in their families. The reign of Charles the Bald had been favourable to such schemes, and in the western parts of the Frankish empire, they had

been almost everywhere successful. Such hereditary offices easily acquired the character of fiefs, as almost all the officials belonged to the class of the king's vassals. Persons living in the district of a count or duke, who had formerly held their fiefs directly of the king, now came to regard these dignitaries as their sole superiors, and being connived at by them in their dealings with the class of small landed proprietors, these last were gradually reduced to a state of servitude, or at least made tributary. The church acted in a similar spirit, so that in the end the whole of the western portion of the empire was in the hands of the secular and ecclesiastical nobles, and the kings not only had no more to give, but possessed scarcely enough to live in a manner suited to their station. Some improvements in this respect, however, were effected by the more energetic successors of Charles the Simple. In the same year in which the Normans settled in France, the male line of the German Carlovingians became extinct by the death of Louis the Child, and Charles the Simple availed himself of the opportunity to unite with his kingdom the province of Lorraine, most of whose inhabitants resembled the French more than the Germans, in their manners and customs as well as in their language. Charles succeeded not only in repelling the German king Conrad, who endeavoured to keep the country, but in forcing its duke to live at a distance from it, at least for a time.

The aversion which the French had for some time felt against the Carlovingians, was increased by the weakness displayed on several occasions by Charles the Simple, as well as by the vigorous determination with which his favourite, Hagano, acted against the rebellious nobles. These feelings prompted Robert, Duke of Francia and brother of Odo of Paris, to aim at the crown, and his partisans actually succeeded, in 922, in inducing the Archbishop of Rheims to crown him king of France. A civil war was the result, and although Robert himself, in

923, fell in a battle in which his son Hugo gained the victory, his party invited Rudolph of Burgundy, a son-in-law of Robert, to take possession of the throne. Rudolph maintained himself from 923 to 936. Charles the Simple was treacherously cast into a prison, and his son Louis found an asylum with Athelstane, the brother of his mother, who was then king of England. The Aquitanians and Normans, however, opposed Rudolph, and Lorraine, after its duke Giselbert had returned, placed itself under the supremacy of the German king, Henry the Fowler. In the midst of these troubles, France was invaded by the Hungarians or Magyars, who, returning from Italy in 924, crossed the Alps, ravaged France, and then went away back with their booty to their eastern home. A quarrel also arose between Rudolph and his brother-in-law Hugo, duke of Francia, in consequence of which Charles the Simple was once more brought forward as king ; but he was imprisoned again, and died soon after, in 929. This event procured for Rudolph the recognition of the dukes of Aquitaine and Normandy, but the Spanish March still asserted its independence.

When Rudolph died, in 936, without leaving an heir to the throne, Louis, the son of Charles the Simple, who in consequence of his stay in England was surnamed D'Outremer, that is, from beyond the sea, was recognised as king, first in Normandy, and afterwards also by Hugo of Francia ; he was crowned by the archbishop of Rheims. Being then scarcely sixteen years old, he was placed under the guidance of Hugo, who called himself Duke of Francia by the grace of God, and treated the young king as second to himself. But as, even during the early period of his reign, Louis endeavoured to assert his independence, and also attempted to re-establish the French supremacy in Lorraine, which had revolted from Otho I. of Germany, he became involved in great difficulties both at home and abroad ; and although he displayed considerable military ability, he was yet unable to secure his recognition in all parts of France until

a late period of his life. Even Hugo, who had for a long time been leagued with his enemies against him, at last, in 954, renewed the oath of allegiance to him. But Louis died in the same year in consequence of a fall from his horse, leaving two sons, Lothaire, who was then twelve years old, and Charles, an infant of one year.

Hugo of Francia, commonly called the Great, disdaining himself to occupy a tottering throne, supported the claims of Lothaire, on condition that his mother Gerberga, a sister of Otho I. of Germany, should cede to him the duchies of Aquitaine and Burgundy, in addition to that of Francia. But he died in 956, before he was able to take possession of Aquitaine. Gerberga, in order to secure the throne to Lothaire, entered into an arrangement with the youthful sons of Hugo, the elder of whom, Hugo Capet, obtained, besides the duchy of Francia, also the counties of Paris and Orleans, and Otho the younger the duchy of Burgundy. When Lothaire had grown to man's estate, he tried to make use of the disputes among the great nobles for the purpose of depriving Duke Richard of his duchy of Normandy. In this attempt, indeed, he failed, but succeeded in depriving the powerful counts of Flanders of a portion of their possessions. His brother Charles, who was duke of Lorraine, threw himself during some internal troubles into the arms of Otho II. of Germany. This provoked Lothaire, and repeated attempts (980 and 984) were made to recover possession of the duchy; but a peace was then concluded, which obliged him to renounce his claims, and his brother Charles received Lower Lorraine as a fief of the king of Germany.

At the time of Lothaire's death, in 986, his son Louis V., surnamed Fainéant, had been his father's colleague for several years, and was now crowned as his successor; but he died after a reign of only fourteen months, perhaps poisoned by his wife; and as he left no children, Hugo Capet was in a condition to seek the crown for himself; for Charles, the last

survivor of the Carolingian line, had drawn upon himself the contempt of the French nation by accepting Lorraine as a fief of a German sovereign.¹ Hugo Capet was already governing from his residence at Paris the extensive plains of northern and central France ; Richard, duke of Normandy, was his brother-in-law ; his brother Henry was duke of Burgundy ; and as almost all the great nobles, especially in northern France, espoused his cause, the archbishop of Rheims, in 987, crowned and anointed him.

France at this time was divided into a number of more or less extensive feudal domains, which had become hereditary ; and the vassals had appropriated so many provinces, that the last Carolingians possessed no more than Soissons, Laon, and a few other small territories. The four duchies of Francia, Normandy, Aquitaine, and Burgundy, as well as the three counties of Toulouse, Flanders, and Vermandois, may be said to have formed independent principalities rather than provinces of the French kingdom. Besides this division there was that into northern and southern France, which differed not only in their language (that spoken on the north of the Loire being called the *langue d'Oïl*, or *langue Française*, that on the south the *langue d'Oc*, afterwards the Provençale language), but also in their manners and legal institutions, the southern portion being generally under the Roman law, while in the north there existed several territorial codes.

5. Arnulf of Carinthia, who, on the deposition of Charles the Fat, in 887, had been raised to the throne of Germany, possessed the very qualities which at the time were most needful, being a brave and well-seasoned warrior. But he too, like the king of France, had to make large concessions to the ecclesiastical and secular nobles, as a reward for the assistance

¹ Charles was succeeded in the duchy of Lower Lorraine by his eldest son Otho, who died in 1005 without issue ; two younger sons, the last genuine Carolingians, died in Germany in obscurity.

they had rendered him in his usurpation. The consequence of these concessions was, that after a time every one of the principal German tribes, especially those on the frontiers, such as the Saxons, Franconians, Suabians, Bavarians, Lotharingians, and Carinthians, were governed by hereditary dukes. At the time of his accession, Germany was threatened in the east by the Slavonians, and in the north-west by the Normans. The former were then governed by a Moravian chief of the name of Zuentibold, who had united all the Slavonian tribes from the Bohemian mountains to the Carpathians into one great empire. Arnulf marched into Moravia with a large army, while the Thuringians invaded Bohemia, and the Hungarians attacked Moravia from the south ; but Zuentibold nevertheless maintained himself against his enemies, and the German king was even obliged to grant him Bohemia as a frontier duchy of Germany. This Slavonian empire decayed immediately after Zuentibold's death, for his three sons, among whom it was divided, weakened each other by incessant wars, until the greater part of their dominions fell into the hands of the Hungarians. This nation, called in their own language *Magyars*, and by Latin writers *Huni*, first appears in history about the time of Arnulf's accession. They were a Finnish or Ugrian race, who had come from the countries about the Ural mountains and the river Volga ; they settled in Hungary about 889, and thence invaded and ravaged the western and southern countries far and wide. Arnulf, as we have seen, employed their aid against Zuentibold ; in the last year of his reign they invaded Italy, and under his feeble successor Saxony was attacked by them.

About the time when the Hungarians appeared on the eastern frontier, the Normans, being expelled from France, invaded Lorraine and ravaged the countries about the Meuse ; but, in 891, Arnulf defeated the most daring of all the Norman tribes in a great battle on the river Dyle near Louvain,

so that henceforth they did not venture on any important undertaking against Germany. The misfortune of that country was, that Arnulf, instead of concentrating his activity in his own dominions, fancied it to be his mission to reunite the empire of Charlemagne as Emperor of the West. This idea led him into useless expeditions into Italy in 894 and 896, to combat the native party of the peninsula, and to support Berengar. During the second of these invasions he took Rome by force, and was crowned Emperor of the West, but was nevertheless unable to maintain himself in Lombardy. In 895, Arnulf gave Lorraine with the title of king to an illegitimate son, who not long after revolted against him ; this led ultimately to the formation of Lorraine into a hereditary duchy, which being situated on the Lower Rhine, between France and Germany, could easily maintain a certain degree of independence.

At Arnulf's death, in 899, the German nobles elected his son Louis, a boy only seven years old, and hence surnamed the Child, as his successor. He was placed under the guardianship of Hatto, archbishop of Mayence, and Otho of Saxony. The former had possessed so much influence with Arnulf, that he was commonly called "the king's heart," and now guided the boy entirely according to his own pleasure. During the internal troubles, which marked the reign of this boy king, and the wars against the Hungarians, hereditary duchies were founded in most German countries. In Saxony, which was particularly exposed to the inroads of the Normans and Slavonians, Ludolf had made himself an independent duke as early as the time of Louis the German, and all Saxony was thenceforth governed by members of his family, who were called after him the Ludolfingians. Franconia, Bavaria, and Suabia, on the other hand, are not mentioned as duchies until the reign of Louis the Child. The influence of Hatto on the young prince was most injurious, and his cruelty and faithlessness are still the themes of popular poems and legends. The Hungarians made ravag-

ing inroads into Saxony and even into Suabia, and it was for the purpose of rewarding the count of Bavaria for the assistance he had rendered against them, that his country was made a hereditary duchy. Nearly the whole of northern Germany was governed by the Ludolfingian Otho of Saxony, who protected the country against foreign invasion, and conducted the administration with fairness and mildness : his great power procured him the surname of the Illustrious. Louis the Child, to whom the bishop of Constance applied Solomon's saying, " Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child," died in 911, not yet twenty years old, and in him the male line of the German Carlovingians became extinct.

The kingdom was in danger of being broken up into a number of independent duchies, for all the dukes possessed the attributes of royalty, and all naturally strove after complete independence, though they were in truth only viceroys. This tendency of the chiefs found a strong support in the particular nationality of each province, whose inhabitants still cherished the recollection of their ancient independence. The church alone could not and did not wish for such a division ; and it was mainly owing to her influence and that of her natural chief in Germany, Archbishop Hatto, that a new king was elected. The feeble Carlovingians in France were entirely disregarded, and the choice fell upon Duke Conrad of Franconia, who was connected through his mother with the Carlovingians. Otho the Illustrious of Saxony had been elected first, but had declined the crown on account of his advanced age, and recommended Conrad, whose family was the wealthiest and most powerful among the German Franks. Archbishop Hatto showed himself a valuable friend to the new king ; and as his influence extended over all the German clergy, connexions were easily formed in every part to counteract the separatist tendencies among the people, as well as among the chiefs or dukes. Otho of Saxony, the most powerful of all the dukes, was of course attached to the

cause of Conrad ; but Duke Arnulf of Bavaria and Gisibert of Lorraine tried to assert their independence by feigning doubts as to the legality of Conrad's election, and entered into negotiations with Charles the Simple of France, whom they pretended to regard as the legitimate heir of the vacant throne. The French king, however, was in such a helpless condition at home, that he could not lend his friends any material assistance, but was obliged to confine himself to intrigues and kind wishes. In two successive years (912 and 913), Conrad made expeditions against Charles, but was unable to gain any other advantage but that of recovering Alsatia, which had been seized by the French. Still, however, Conrad might have been more than a match for his allied enemies, had not the Suabians also risen against him in 913, and invited the Hungarians to invade his dominions. These latter advanced into Suabia, ravaging everything on their way ; but on their return they were defeated in Bavaria by Arnulf and two Alemannian chiefs. Conrad endeavoured to secure the attachment of the Alemannians by marrying the daughter of one of these two nobles ; but an attack they made on the bishop of Constance involved Conrad in a war against Alemannia, which lasted from 914 till 916. The Alemannian leaders were obliged in the end to surrender, and were treacherously put to death. This act provoked Arnulf of Bavaria, their relative, to open war against the king ; but when Conrad approached with his army, Arnulf took refuge among the Hungarians and incited them to fresh inroads into Germany, during which Alsatia and Lorraine were devastated.

The good understanding with Saxony had come to an end in the very year after Conrad's accession ; for after Otho's death in 912, Conrad, whose great object throughout was to compel the great nobles to submit to his royal authority, was determined not to allow Otho's son and successor Henry, to retain the excessive powers which had been possessed by his father. It is even said that Conrad, in conjunction with Hatto, formed the design

of murdering Henry ; but the Saxons reminded their duke that he might gain his end even without the king's sanction. The consequence was, that a war broke out between Henry and Conrad, in which the duke not only maintained himself in the possession of those parts of Thuringia which the king wished to take from him, but even gained the title of Duke of all the Thuringians. After much bloodshed, Henry joined the league of the southern Germans with France, though he was too patriotic to form any connexion with the Hungarians. In Alemannia, also, a national duchy was in the course of formation ; but here Conrad, being assisted by the church, succeeded in setting up a duke who, at least for a time, was faithful and obedient to him. When Conrad, who had himself no children, returned wounded from his last campaign against Bavaria, and felt that his bodily strength was becoming exhausted, he formed the noble determination to save the unity of his kingdom, which he had been unable to restore by force of arms, by persuading his brother, Duke Eberhard, and the other chiefs of the Franconians, to renounce their claims to the succession, and, in the event of his death, to give their votes for Henry, duke of Saxony, the bravest, most powerful, and most honourable of all the princes of the time. Conrad died in 918, much lamented by all the Franks, and his brother unhesitatingly sacrificed the interests of his own family and carried his brother's wish into effect. The kingly dignity in Germany thus passed from the hands of the Franks, and more especially from those of the Carolingian dynasty, into those of the dukes of Saxony.

6. After the dissolution of the Carolingian empire, the inhabitants of northern Italy manifested a strong desire to recover their independence under a native prince ; but they were too much divided, partly by national differences, and partly by the state of their intellectual culture ; in addition to which Italy, as the centre of western civilisation, was always eagerly coveted by foreign princes. Rome, which was still the chief seat of

learning, and was looked upon as the head of western Christendom, endeavoured to connect the imperial dignity with Italy through its dependence on the papal sanction, and thereby to restore the unity of the peninsula, or even to secure its supremacy over the other countries of the west. The realization of such a design, however, was impossible, on account of the many divisions which distracted the country. The imperial crown and the sovereignty of northern Italy, were the bones of contention between Italian nobles on the one hand, and the rulers of Germany, France, and Upper Burgundy on the other; while at the same time the Saracens, and afterwards the Normans, disputed the possession of the south with the Greeks. In the end, the north of Italy became connected with Germany, whose rulers acquired the imperial dignity, while in the south a new state was formed by the Normans.

After the death of Charles the Fat, two parties in Italy stood opposed to each other, one German and the other French. The German party in the north contrived to set up Berengar of Friuli, a grandson of Louis the German, as king; while Guido, duke of Spoleto, who died in 894, and after him his son Lambert, were crowned emperors through the influence of the French party. When, in 896, Arnulf of Carinthia obtained the imperial title, Berengar managed to secure Italy for himself as a kingdom. After Lambert's death in 897, Louis of Lower Burgundy, a son of Buoso, for a short time enjoyed the imperial dignity, until Berengar, in 916, proclaimed himself emperor. But even now Rudolph of Upper Burgundy was called in to oppose him, and Berengar was murdered at Verona in 924. Rudolph, however, though he had conquered Berengar, was unable to maintain himself in Italy, for, in 934, he succumbed to a party which had been formed to support Hugo of Provence, and was obliged, in 926, to conclude a treaty in which he gave up the kingdom of Italy to Hugo. But Hugo ceded to Rudolph Lower Burgundy, with the exception of the county of Arles, so that hence-

forth the two Burgundian kingdoms, including Switzerland, Savoy, and the south-eastern parts of France, were united under one head. After Hugo and his successor Lothaire (who in 931 became the colleague of his father Hugo) had fearfully tyrannized over Italy, maintaining themselves only by cunning and cruelty, a hostile party, headed by Berengar II. of Ivrea, gradually acquired so much power as to throw Hugo and Lothaire completely into the shade. Hugo even quitted Italy, and withdrew to his own county of Arles; Lothaire died in 950, probably of poison. Berengar II. now acted in so shameless and tyrannical a manner, that Lothaire's widow Adelaide and her friends implored the protection of King Otho I. of Germany. Otho speedily came down upon Italy, married Adelaide, and compelled Berengar, at a diet held at Augsburg in 952, to receive Italy south and west of the Adige as a German fief, while the eastern part was united with the duchy of Bavaria. But as Berengar afterwards again indulged in persecuting his opponents, and was guilty of acts of cruelty, Otho proceeded to Italy a second time, and, in 961, assumed at Pavia the title of King of Italy. The year after this, Otho was crowned emperor at Rome, and Berengar, who had become his prisoner, was kept in a mountain fortress until the end of his life.

During all these troubles and changes, large concessions had been made to the clergy and nobles by those aspiring to the sovereignty; but the higher nobility was almost extirpated, or had become impoverished by the loss of power and the division of property. The political constitution which was thus gradually formed in northern Italy, was mainly determined by those immunities which had been granted by the claimants of the kingly dignity. The country, as far as it fell into the hands of the German kings, was almost wholly divided into small ecclesiastical territories; and the papal dominions themselves were in reality nothing but the extensive territory of St. Peter, enjoying certain immunities. This last state consisted of the

original donation of Pepin, that is, Romagna and Urbino, which had subsequently been increased by lands in Etruria, and some districts ceded by the duke of Beneventum.

During the same period, southern Italy had been constantly distracted by various petty wars, for there the Greeks maintained themselves by the side of the Lombard principalities, while already some strong positions had fallen into the hands of the Saracens. Ever since the time of Otho I., the German emperors tried to interfere in this part of the peninsula also, but their attempts were not very successful; and in the eleventh century, the whole of southern Italy fell into the hands of the Normans.

The Venetian islands had formed a political union in the year 697, under the government of a duke or doge; but they remained subject to the Byzantine empire, until the iconoclastic edicts of the eastern emperors induced the Venetians, like the other Italians, to renounce the sovereignty of Constantinople. About the year 800, the seat of government was transferred to the island of Rialto, which was connected with the other islands by bridges, and so became the centre of the mighty city of Venice.

7. During the period when the empire of Charlemagne was losing its power in consequence of its repeated divisions and subdivisions, the Germanic races inhabiting Scandinavia and the districts whence formerly the Anglo-Saxons had issued, were spreading the terror of their name over the coasts of the North Sea and the Atlantic. Their ravages extended from Friesland to Aquitaine, but were not confined to the sea-coasts; in their small boats they often sailed up the Rhine, the Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne, pillaging the towns on their banks in the very heart of the country, and usually returning laden with money and booty. The danger threatening the civilized parts of Europe from these pagan adventurers had been foreseen by Charlemagne, but the precautionary measures devised by him

were neglected by his successors, and when the Normans began their bold and daring expeditions, the Frankish empire was already in a state of decay. The causes which led them thus to roam over the sea, and descend upon the coasts in such numbers, were partly their innate restlessness, which they shared with many other Germanic nations, and partly feuds and wars in their own country, which compelled them to seek new homes in foreign lands. We have already seen that in Germany the country between the Elbe and the Eider was conquered by them, and that a feeble king of France gave up to them the province of Normandy. From this latter country, the Normans exercised an extraordinary influence upon the history of Europe, for it was from Normandy that, at a later period, they proceeded and established their dominion in Italy and Sicily, and from it came the army which conquered England. While living in their native country of Scandinavia, their Germanic character had been developed in all its vigour and freshness; but their adventurous spirit, being tempered in France by the influence of the Christian religion and the Roman civilisation, produced that proud and bold, yet chivalrous spirit, which afterwards characterizes the Normans wherever they appear. It deserves to be noticed here that a Swedish tribe of the name of Russ formed the nucleus of the Russian state on the opposite coast. Iceland also appears in history during this period. It had probably been discovered by Irish missionaries in the year 795, but its first inhabitants are said to have been fugitives from Norway, who arrived there in 874. Notwithstanding the ungenial climate and the barrenness of the soil, the people prospered, developed a free constitution, and were induced, about the year 1000, to adopt Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

THE ASCENDENCY OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE IN THE AFFAIRS OF EUROPE, AND GENERAL HISTORY OF THE CHURCH DOWN TO THE PERIOD OF THE CRUSADES.

1. General remarks; 2. Henry I. (919-936); 3. Otho I. surnamed the Great (936-973); 4. Otho II. (973-983); 5. Otho III. (983-1002); 6. Henry II. (1002-1024); 7. General remarks on the period of the Saxon emperors; 8. Change of dynasty; 9. Conrad II. the Salian (1024-1039); 10. Henry III. (1039-1056); 11. Henry IV. (1056-1106); 12. Pope Gregory VII. (1073-1086); 13. Disputes between Henry IV. and Gregory VII.; 14. Henry IV. and his sons.

1. THE period following the extinction of the German branch of the Carlovingian race, is the time of the supremacy of the German empire in the general affairs of Europe; it is the time of the "Roman empire of the German nation," which on the whole continued to maintain its ascendancy until the close of the middle ages. Amid the dangers and troubles to which Germany had been exposed under the last Carlovingians, dukes had everywhere arisen as the representatives of the different tribes of which the nation was composed, each being ready to defend the independence of his own. But notwithstanding the danger of Germany being in this manner broken up into a number of small independent states, the firmness of Conrad and the first Saxon kings succeeded in preserving the unity of the kingdom, and they found a strong and safe support in the church. As Germany thus rose to the rank of the first power in the West, the dignity of Roman emperor became permanently connected with that of king of Germany; but as the imperial crown had to be formally bestowed by the pope, the papal see also acquired in the course of time a paramount influence over the whole of western Europe. Hence France and England also became closely connected with Rome, and

the affairs of the church as well as of the state having been well regulated and secured, these two countries now entered upon a new and active career of development. In Spain, Christianity began its contest against Mahomedanism, and the small Christian states which had been formed in the north of the peninsula, gradually extended their frontiers towards the south. In the north and east of Europe, Christianity was on the whole established as early as the year 1000, having been introduced by German missionaries among the Hungarians, Poles, Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians. Russia, however, instead of attaching itself to the western church, adopted the doctrines and rites of the Greek, which had been instrumental in introducing Christianity into Russia. The Greek empire, which thus still exercised a considerable influence upon the east of Europe, was ultimately separated from the west, and the separation was completed by the schism between the eastern and western churches ; the latter embracing not only all the western countries inhabited by Roman, Germanic, and Celtic populations, but including in the east the Hungarians and some of the Slavonic tribes. The affairs of Italy were during this period gradually consolidated in the south by the conquests of the Normans, and in the north by the supremacy of the German emperors. The power of the caliphate sank as rapidly as it had risen, but the Arabs, especially those of Spain, exercised great influence on the civilisation of Europe by their arts and sciences ; in Asia and Africa, too, Mahomedanism did much to draw wild and barbarous nations within the pale of civilisation. The struggles between the Christians and Saracens in Spain first awakened that chivalrous spirit, which ultimately led to the memorable collision between the West and the East, known in history by the name of the Crusades.

2. Henry I. is surnamed the Fowler, because it is related, that when the ambassadors announced to him his election as successor of Conrad, they found him occupied in the country

catching birds. The archbishop of Mayence offered to anoint him, but Henry modestly declined the honour, saying that he was quite satisfied with having been elected and recognised by the Franconian and Saxon nobles, and thereby intimating that he would not be indebted to the church for his elevation. According to the custom of his predecessors, his official designation was, "King of the Franconians," that is, the eastern or German branch of the Franks, but the object he pursued throughout his reign was, not to establish the dominion of one tribe over the rest, but rather that each tribe should manage its own affairs according to its own laws and customs ; at the same time, however, his plan was that, although each duke governed his own race, the king should stand above all dukes and all races, as the supreme judge, the supreme commander in war, and the supreme protector of the church.

The dukes of Alemannia, Lorraine, and even Bavaria, at first refused to recognise him as their king, and aimed at complete independence. They had to be compelled by force of arms, and Henry accordingly marched first with his vassals against Duke Burkhard of Alemannia, who, although he is called an active warrior, did not venture to offer any resistance, but surrendered to the king with all his people. From Alemannia Henry turned his arms against Bavaria, whose duke Arnulf, after his return from Hungary, intended to set himself up as king. But he in vain endeavoured to maintain himself at Ratisbon, and was obliged with all his subjects to acknowledge Henry as his king. He, like Burkhard of Alemannia, retained his duchy, and his powers were even increased by the right of appointing all the bishops of Bavaria, which had previously belonged to the Frankish kings alone.

Henry now began to think of re-uniting Lorraine with the kingdom of Germany. Giselbert, duke of Lorraine, availing himself of the weakness of Charles the Simple, was endeavouring to make himself independent of France, hoping to be

supported by Henry, who on a former occasion had offered him his protection. But the French monarch, by making liberal promises to the duke, induced him to recognise the supremacy of the French crown, and Henry himself was satisfied with being formally recognised by Charles the Simple as king of the eastern Franks (921). By this act the French Carolingians at once renounced their claims to the sovereignty over the German Franks and the whole of Germany. When, however, King Rudolph had ascended the French throne, Henry, in 925, took advantage of the internal disputes in France : he subdued Lorraine by force of arms, and that province thereafter remained connected with the German empire until the seventeenth century. Within a few years Henry had thus united under his sceptre all the countries in which the German language was spoken.

His chief care henceforth was bestowed upon Saxony and Thuringia, which he governed in his capacity of both duke and king. In 924, Saxony had been invaded by the Hungarians, who traversed the whole country and destroyed everything that came in their way. One of their chiefs fell into the hands of Henry ; but he was ransomed by the Hungarians, who promised to abstain from war for a period of nine years. Henry at the same time agreed to pay them an annual tribute, not indeed because he despaired of being able to conquer them, but because he calculated, that by this means he would ultimately be sure to free his dominions for ever from those dangerous enemies. The truce concluded on that occasion appears to have referred only to Saxony and Thuringia, for two years later we find the Hungarians making inroads into Bavaria, Alemannia, and even Lorraine, while Henry's precautionary measures were confined to Saxony and Thuringia ; for it was there that he strengthened the frontiers against the enemy by fortifying the open towns and placing strong garrisons in them. By this means he gave an impulse to the consolidation of large towns,

which soon became centres of commerce and industry. While Henry was thus securing his dominions within, he did not neglect their frontiers in the east and north. Several expeditions were undertaken against the Slavonian tribes, which were subdued one after another, and the king extended his dominion as far as the river Oder. The duke of Bohemia was forced by a single campaign to acknowledge Henry's supremacy and pay tribute. In 929, the Slavonians made a great united effort against their German conquerors, but the bloody battle of Lunkini (Lenzen), between Hamburgh and Berlin, put an end to their attempts for a long time.

In the course of these wars Henry formed and trained a most excellent army, which he felt would be a match for the Hungarians. He is said to have been the creator of the German cavalry, and thereby to have introduced the order of knights, that is, warriors who served on horseback; but this belief is without foundation. In all the countries occupied by Germanic nations, it had gradually become customary for those who in time of war were bound to serve in person, and distinguished themselves by their superior armour and skill, to be alone called upon by the kings to serve in their armies. The army thus came to consist of the king's vassals, with their followers and wealthy freemen. Both classes being able, in addition to their better armour, to provide themselves with a war-horse, took pride and pleasure in serving their king on horseback. This mode of fighting was naturally fostered by the wars against the Slavonians and Hungarians, whose cavalry had always been their most dreaded force.

Immediately after the victory of Lunkini, Henry celebrated the marriage of his son Otho with the sister of the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstane, an event which shows, on the one hand, the increasing respect gained by the Anglo-Saxon rulers among the nations of the Continent, and on the other, that the founder of the Saxon dynasty in Germany was desirous to maintain a

friendly connexion with the Saxons in Britain. It is even supposed that Henry wished to imitate the example of Alfred the Great in his endeavours to consolidate his kingdom, while at the same time he allowed free self-government in the several provinces and cities of his empire.

On the expiration of the truce with the Hungarians, Henry determined to resume the war against them with his Saxons alone, who at one of their diets declared their readiness to afford their king and duke every assistance against the enemies who had caused them so much suffering. When Henry refused to continue to pay the tribute, the Hungarians at once marched into Saxony, but were defeated, in 933, in a great battle near Merseburg, which for ever freed northern Germany from their ravaging inroads. When peace was secured on that part of the frontiers, Henry, in 934, undertook an expedition against the Danes, and not only compelled their king to acknowledge his supremacy, but obliged him to cede the territory between the Eider and Slie, out of which afterwards the march county of Schleswig arose.

In consequence of these successful undertakings, Henry I. was looked up to as the most powerful king in all Europe. He now resolved to go to Rome ; whether as a pilgrim, or to undertake the protectorate of the church, is uncertain ; but ill health obliged him to give up this plan. In 935, he had a paralytic attack from which he did not completely recover. He therefore summoned a diet of the great nobles to Erfurt for the purpose of making arrangements for the succession. He proposed his eldest son Otho, who was then about twenty-three years old, and though he was born at a time when his father was only duke, the assembled chiefs at once acquiesced in the king's choice. Henry died soon after this, on the 2d of July 936, leaving behind him the reputation of a most excellent and kindly ruler.

3. After his father's death, Otho's formal election took place

at Aix-la-Chapelle, with which town so many recollections of Charlemagne and the empire were connected. Otho was crowned and anointed by the archbishops of Mayence and Cologne, and the courtly offices were performed with great display by the dukes. At first it seemed as if the new king were destined to enjoy in peace and tranquillity the fruits of his father's exertions ; but it soon became manifest that the elements of disobedience and the tendency of the dukes to make themselves independent, were no more extinct than the foreign enemies were permanently subdued. The first who rose in arms was Boleslav of Bohemia, who was so determined to stop the progress of Christianity among his subjects, and of the German ascendancy, that he put to death his own brother who had become a Christian, and waged war against a neighbouring Slavonian tribe merely because it recognised the supremacy of the Saxons. The war, which thus arose between Otho and the Bohemians, lasted for a period of ten years, at the end of which the Bohemian chief was compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of his conqueror. An invasion of Franconia by the Hungarians is mentioned as early as 937 ; being encouraged by internal disturbances in Germany, they also renewed their attacks upon Saxony ; but two of their armies were so completely defeated that henceforth we hear no more of their invading Saxony.

The first great disturbances in Germany itself were caused by the two sons of Duke Arnulf of Bavaria refusing to furnish their contingent to the king's army. Otho, however, succeeded, though not without a bloody struggle, in deposing the elder, and then gave the duchy to Berthold, but with more limited powers ; for the new duke and all his successors not only lost the right to appoint the Bavarian bishops, but were controlled in their administration by a count palatine. While these things were still going on, some of the nobles of Saxony itself, thinking they had been slighted by the king, formed a conspiracy in

which even Otho's brother Henry took part, and succeeded in gaining over Giselbert, duke of Lorraine. The conspirators assembled in Lorraine, and even the archbishops of Mayence and Cologne entered into an understanding with them. Duke Hermann of Alemannia (Suabia), who alone remained faithful, gained a decisive battle, in 939, near Andernach. Some of the conspirators perished, and others who escaped were afterwards pardoned. The result of this battle was a change in the relation of the dukes to the king; for henceforth Franconia no longer had a duke, the king himself assuming that title; and after Giselbert's death, Otho appointed a new duke of Lorraine, without any regard to hereditary claims. The king's brother Henry, who had escaped at Andernach, afterwards engaged in a fresh conspiracy, and was again pardoned; but his loyalty was not secured until 946, when Otho gave him the duchy of Bavaria.

Soon after the death of Henry I., the Danes had invaded the territory recovered by him, and had slain the governor and massacred the Saxons who had established themselves there as colonists. In consequence of these outrages, Otho, in 947, undertook an expedition against the Danish king Harald, whom he pursued as far as Jutland, and finally compelled not only to acknowledge his supremacy but to embrace Christianity. In consequence of this, three new bishoprics were formed on the north of the Elbe and connected with the archbishopric of Hamburgh. The year before this expedition, Otho had lost his beloved queen Edith, whose death made a deep impression on his mind; and as the wars with both his foreign and domestic enemies were now brought to a close, he turned his attention chiefly to the affairs of the church and the internal organization of his kingdom. In respect of the latter, he succeeded more completely in thwarting the ambitious schemes of the dukes than had ever been possible for his father; and after various struggles his object was so fully attained,

that, in 954, those German duchies which had not been abolished altogether, were presided over by members of his own family, or by men devotedly attached to its interests. In order to secure the regal authority still more in these duchies, counts of the palace, or counts palatine, were appointed in each for the purpose of watching the king's interests against any encroachments on the part of the dukes. It was for a similar purpose that new margraves (counts of a march) were appointed in some frontier districts to protect them against enemies from within as well as from without.

But Otho was not more active in maintaining the unity of his kingdom than in promoting the interests of the church, which had supported him from the first against the separatist tendencies of the dukes. He exerted all his powers to maintain order in the church and among the clergy; and after Edith's death, in particular, he not only showed the greatest liberality towards the church, but increased her power by spreading the Christian religion among the eastern neighbours of his kingdom and establishing bishoprics among them. His increasing power at home and the interest he took in the affairs of the church, made him look at an early period beyond the boundaries of his own kingdom, and several circumstances soon combined to turn his attention more particularly to Italy. During the decay of the Carlovingian dynasty in France and the disturbances in Italy, Otho, though sufficiently engaged at home, did much to restore order and peace in those countries; and during the disputes between Louis d'Outremer and Hugo the Great, both of whom were married to sisters of Otho, he had often stepped in to decide questions either with his sword or otherwise. In Burgundy, which, even after the union of its two parts, was unable to attain any great power and authority, Otho acted the part of a friendly mediator, protecting the weak against the intrigues of the powerful. At a somewhat later period, Berengar II. of Ivrea solicited his aid against the lawless conduct of Hugo of Arles; but Otho did

not interfere in the affairs of the Peninsula, until Berengar's enemies had become strong enough to shake his throne. This was at the time when Otho had consolidated his own kingdom, and he accordingly resolved to march southward, and, if necessary, to use his sword in putting an end to the disorders, which were tearing Italy to pieces and ruining the authority of the church.

After all that Otho had accomplished in his own country, he was justly regarded as the most illustrious sovereign in Christendom. All the other princes were eager either to acquire his friendship and goodwill, or to strengthen these feelings where they already existed ; in point of fact, all looked up to him as the representative of western Christianity, and as a worthy successor of Charlemagne. But according to the prevailing ideas of the time, one thing was still wanting—the imperial crown. The last German king who had worn it, Arnulf, had not used it either for his own good or that of his kingdom ; but he had left in the breasts of his successors the seed of ambition, and even Henry I. had looked upon his obtaining the imperial crown as the ultimate end and object of all his exertions ; but he found so much to do at home, that he had no time to devote to the realization of his fair dream. For whoever wished to obtain that crown was obliged, according to the example set by Charlemagne, to receive it at Rome from the hands of the Pontiff. Its possession was further connected with the sovereignty of Italy, which again was inseparable from the holy city of Rome. That city was still looked up to not only as the capital of the world, or at least of western Christendom, but as the metropolis of Italy ; and this very circumstance led to the belief that the imperial crown was an appurtenance of Italy and of Rome. Hence, after the death of Arnulf, the great feudal lords of Italy, who had become independent territorial sovereigns in a higher degree than anywhere else, considered themselves entitled to aspire to the imperial dignity, and through it to the sovereignty of all

Italy. But as each of these nobles was harbouring the same design, and was unwilling to submit to the authority of any other, none of them could hope to attain his object except through the favour of the holy see, which had cunningly usurped the right of bestowing the crown on whomsoever it pleased. The popes of that period were indeed quite willing to favour Italian candidates, because they had no direct connexions with the rulers of France and Germany, who were, moreover, too distant to afford any effective protection against those misfortunes which weighed heavily on the papacy. For the popes needed protection, on the one hand, against the Arabs, who established themselves more and more permanently on the coasts of southern Italy, even as far north as the mouth of the Garigliano, and did much injury to the property of the church and the city of Rome; and on the other, against the insolence of the secular nobility and their own vassals. During the latter period of the Carlovingians, the popes, like the other spiritual lords of Italy, had been obliged to introduce the feudal system into their dominions and grant fiefs to men, who until then had been only their servants by appointment; and that merely for the purpose of securing their assistance against hostile neighbours. This was a dangerous measure, for ere long these vassals not only claimed the independent possession and enjoyment of their fiefs, but even acquired a paramount influence over the papacy itself; so that in the end the election to the holy see depended much more upon them than upon the clergy and people of Rome, to whom it belonged by ancient custom. Against such abuses an Italian emperor seemed to be the best protector; but it was at the same time evident, that the other territorial nobles would always be both able and desirous to thwart his actions. These considerations in the end turned the attention of the popes as well as of some among the nobles themselves, to some foreign potentate, who, like Charlemagne, might be able and willing to afford to Italy and

the church that protection and support which were so much needed.

Such were the circumstances that had led to the coronation of Louis of Lower Burgundy and several others ; but they, as well as the Italian emperors, found themselves utterly powerless, and the crown in their hands proved to be a mere delusive phantom. After Lothaire's death in 950, Berengar II. imagined that he would be generally recognised as king of Italy. He made Adelaide, Lothaire's widow, his prisoner, intending, it is said, to marry her. But almost immediately a numerous party was formed which looked about for foreign assistance, and was secretly headed by the beautiful and gifted Adelaide. This party applied to Otho of Germany, the most powerful monarch of the time, and no other seemed capable of coping with the prudent and dreaded Berengar. The moment Otho had heard of Adelaide's captivity, he had resolved to liberate her, to make her his wife, and through her to assume the sovereignty of Italy. Accordingly, in 951, he appeared in Lombardy, accompanied by his dukes, took possession of Pavia, called himself king of the Franks and Lombards, and not long afterwards married Adelaide. Berengar had taken to flight. Otho now sent an embassy to Rome, but was prevented from proceeding thither in person by the news of disturbances which had broken out in Germany.

Otho's interference in the affairs of Italy and his marriage with Adelaide seem to have been displeasing to his German subjects, for during his absence a great insurrection had broken out. As he hastened back to his native country, he was followed by Berengar, who, at a diet held in Augsburg in 952, received back Lombardy as a fief from the German king. The insurrection in Germany was fostered by Ludolf, duke of Suabia, a son of Otho by Edith, and was joined also by Conrad of Lorraine and the archbishop of Mayence. The last of these with his followers was sentenced to exile by Otho's desire ; but in

consequence of this severity the revolt spread over all parts of his dominions, and was joined even by the Saxons, so that the king found himself forsaken by nearly all his subjects. His two brothers, Henry, duke of Bavaria, and Bruno, archbishop of Cologne, stood faithfully by him ; but Henry was scarcely able to maintain himself in Bavaria, for that country was at the time invaded by the Hungarians, who, perceiving the distracted state of Germany, tried to profit by it. The Slavonians on the frontiers of Saxony were likewise rising and endeavouring to shake off the yoke of the Germans. The insurgents in Germany at first even entered into an alliance with the pagan barbarians, but the baseness of this step soon became obvious to the rebels themselves, who then penitently submitted to their lawful sovereign. Ludolf held out longest, but was in the end obliged on his knees to sue for pardon. The death of the archbishop of Mayence, and a diet held immediately after, in 954, at length restored peace in Germany; and a natural son of the king was made archbishop of Mayence. Conrad lost Lorraine, which was given to the faithful Bruno, and Ludolf, having forfeited his duchy of Suabia, was afterwards intrusted with the command of an army in Italy, where he died in 957.

Meanwhile, the war against the Slavonians was still going on, when the king found it necessary to undertake in person the command against the Hungarians. They had invaded Bavaria and Alemannia with an army consisting, it is said, of 100,000 men. Otho met them on the Lechfeld near Augsburg, on the 10th of August 955, and the defeat they sustained on that day freed all Germany for ever from their invasions. Christianity now also began to be introduced among them, for the kings of the Hungarians, finding that their subjects could no longer maintain themselves by plundering neighbouring countries, gladly admitted German missionaries, who, along with the new religion, also introduced agriculture and the other peaceful arts of civilized life. A frontier march had been established even by

Charlemagne against the Avars in 803 ; but this march had been destroyed in 907 by the Hungarians ; and now, after the battle of the Lechfeld, a new east march (afterwards called Austria) was established by Otho. About the same time all the Slavonian tribes between the Elbe and the Oder made a united effort, under their chief Stoinef, to shake off the German yoke ; but they, too, were defeated in a decisive battle. The results were the same as in Hungary, for churches and convents were erected in many parts of the country, great numbers embraced Christianity, and the complete Christianization of the Slavonians seemed not very distant : missionaries were sent even into Russia. During the period between his return from Italy and the year 960, Otho had thus not only recovered his own kingdom, the whole of which had at one time been nearly lost, but had secured its ever threatened eastern frontiers by humbling the Hungarians and Slavonians.

Berengar II. had availed himself of the absence of Otho to make himself more and more independent in his Lombardic kingdom, of which he had the administration as a vassal of Otho ; for a time he had been kept in check by Otho's son Ludolf, but after his death, in 957, he again came forward with his old pretensions. Even at Rome he acted as if he were an irresponsible monarch, and the many complaints brought against him by the pope and the great nobles of the party of Adelaide, induced Otho, in 961, once more to put himself at the head of an Italian expedition. He now appeared in the peninsula with far greater authority and power than on the first occasion. Berengar was declared to have forfeited his kingdom, and without venturing upon a battle sought safety within the walls of mountain fortresses. Meanwhile Otho received at Milan the iron crown of the Lombards, and in February 962 he was crowned emperor at Rome by Pope John XII. The same pope, however, soon after commenced negotiations with Berengar, and the Italian nobles again had recourse to their

customary intrigues ; but Otho speedily showed them that they did not know with whom they had to deal.

The political troubles of Italy during the last hundred years had produced a fearful demoralization, which pervaded all ranks of the people, but more especially the nobility and the higher clergy. The demoralization, however, was not of the brutal kind which had reigned in Germany under the last Carolingians ; for the Italians still cherished a certain external elegance, and observed in their life a degree of outward decency, both of which were an inalienable inheritance from the time of the Romans. But with all this, the sentiments by which human society is held together had almost entirely vanished. Marriage and the ties of family were regarded as little more than obsolete institutions ; the most unbridled licentiousness and a general belief that every one might act as he pleased, formed the characteristic features of that age. The Christian religion was unable to check the nation in its downward career, for not only did it seem to have lost all authority, but had actually become an object of scorn and contempt. Many of the popes themselves were no better than those by whom they were surrounded, and Christendom witnessed the singular spectacle of men occupying the chair of St. Peter, who were pagans in their words as well as in their actions. John XII. was one of the very worst of that class of popes : not only was he an open adulterer, a murderer, and a simonist, but he had committed the most flagrant acts of sacrilege and blasphemy. When his intrigues with Berengar became known to the emperor, he was obliged to take to flight, and three days later Otho, in an assembly of prelates, caused him to be deposed, and Leo VIII. to be elected in his stead. Berengar, being taken prisoner, was carried to Bavaria, where he died in a prison at Bamberg. About this time Otho began to give large domains to the Italian bishops, who thus succeeded the great nobles in the government of the towns,

and by their milder rule enabled them to develop that liberty of which the matured fruit appeared at a later period of the middle ages.

In the beginning of 965, Otho returned across the Alps, and for some time was busily engaged in regulating the affairs of his kingdom and of the church ; but he had not been in Germany more than two years, when fresh disturbances broke out at Rome and in other parts of Italy, which obliged him to return to it a third time. He was, however, somewhat detained by the necessity of arranging the affairs of Lorraine, for his excellent brother Bruno died in 965 ; and no new duke being appointed, the duchy was henceforth governed by the bishops and nobles in the name of the emperor. At Christmas, in 966, Otho was again at Rome, and soon after assembled a synod at Ravenna, at which he acted as the real sovereign of Italy.

Southern Italy was still unsubdued, and Otho felt that there too the enemies of the Christian religion must be reduced by force of arms. Berengar's sons had escaped, and the eldest, Adelgis, contrived to secure the support of the Byzantine court in his attempts to gain the kingdom of Italy. Otho, finding that Adelgis had no other supporters, neutralized his efforts by forming friendly relations with Byzantium, and after many difficulties succeeded in convincing the eastern emperor that it was his own interest to recognise the restoration of the western empire as an accomplished fact, instead of ignoring or even opposing it. A friendship was thus established between the two empires. The bond was strengthened by the proposal that Otho's son, Otho (II.), who had been fixed upon as his successor even before the second Italian expedition, should marry Theophano, a daughter of Romanus II. Young Otho was summoned to Italy and crowned emperor by the pope. During the negotiations about this marriage, which the Byzantine court opposed with all its might, Otho I., supported by the prince of Capua, undertook an expedition into southern Italy, for the purpose of

taking forcible possession of the Greek provinces of Apulia and Calabria ; and it was not till after some hard fights, that the emperor of the East at length consented to the marriage, which was celebrated at Rome in 972. What portion of southern Italy was ceded to Otho, is unknown ; one portion certainly remained in his possession, but it is manifest that he had to evacuate Apulia. The emperor, who had now been in Italy for a period of six years, returned to Germany and with indefatigable activity devoted himself there to the interests of the church. At Quedlinburg he assembled around him the principal dukes of his kingdom, and ambassadors from all parts of Europe paid homage to him. He felt, however, that his strength was becoming exhausted, and soon withdrew to his family seat in Saxony, where he died without any illness in May 973.

Since the time of Charlemagne, Europe had seen no sovereign equal to Otho I. ; he had realized the great idea of Charlemagne to found a Christian empire of the west, having Germany for its basis ; and that country thus became through him the most influential state of Europe. Besides Germany, he united under his sceptre the duchies of Upper and Lower Lorraine and northern and central Italy. The powerful dukes of Bohemia and Poland, the chiefs of the Slavonians on the Baltic, and the Lombard dukes in southern Italy, recognised his supremacy ; while he maintained the most friendly relations with the kingdoms of France, England, and Spain, as well as with the Byzantine empire.

4. In principle the kingdom of Germany was an elective monarchy, but the princes of the Saxon dynasty had already commenced to make it hereditary, in the same manner in which, at a later period, the Capetingians succeeded in permanently securing to themselves the throne of France. Otho I. had contrived to secure the succession of his son at a time when the latter was only a boy of seven years old ; and having been crowned emperor at a later period, he succeeded his father at

the age of eighteen, as quietly as if he had been lawfully entitled to the throne. Under the guidance of his mother Adelaide, he had received a most excellent education, and had also been well trained in arms and in the management of state affairs; but the indulgence of fond parents, and the certainty of succeeding his father, had at the same time fostered in him a certain degree of recklessness, which he was unable to overcome until a late period of his life. His mother's influence over him continued even long after his marriage, and his wife Theophano, who, on account of her Greek origin, was unpopular, was almost always obliged to submit to her.

The condition in which he found the empire at his accession was such as to render it easy to maintain a strong central government, supported as he was by the church, by the Saxon nobles, and by the smaller vassals in all parts of the empire. Still, however, the old separatist tendencies again manifested themselves, but they were speedily and energetically suppressed. In Lorraine, disturbances were created by the nephews of Gisibert, who were encouraged by the French, but were put down in 974. Henry II. of Bavaria, Otho's cousin, who had been duke ever since 955, not only renewed the old attempts to make Bavaria independent, and, in particular, to resume the right of appointing the bishops, but even entered into hostile schemes with the dukes of Bohemia and Poland. Otho therefore summoned him before a diet of the empire, and as his guilt was established by satisfactory proofs, he was placed in close confinement. In the autumn of the year 974, Otho undertook an expedition against the Danes, who were making encroachments upon Germany, but were soon compelled to retreat.

Italy was less secure than the success of Otho I. might have led the young monarch to expect, for although the German party at Rome, without his interference, had gained the upper hand over a faction of nobles, and even Salerno, amid struggles

with the Greek party, recognised the emperor of the West as its sovereign, yet wide-spread disturbances broke out in Italy, which seem to have been connected with the removal of Adelaide and her party from all interference in the affairs of government—a measure that had been brought about through the influence of Theophano and several high ecclesiastical dignitaries. This circumstance also provoked the hostility of Lothaire, king of France, a son-in-law of Adelaide. About the same time, Henry of Bavaria escaped from prison and established himself again at Ratisbon. When, on being expelled from that place, he took refuge with the duke of Bohemia, Bavaria was given to the young Duke Otho of Suabia. The emperor, however, not satisfied with this, marched against Bohemia, conquered its duke, and having made Henry his captive, sent him back to his former prison.

Scarcely were these affairs settled when, in 978, Lothaire of France, without having declared war, invaded Lorraine, and advanced upon Aix-la-Chapelle, where the emperor was then staying. Otho, being taken by surprise and unprepared, was obliged to take to flight, and the town was plundered; but he immediately summoned his nobles to a diet at Dortmund, where all vowed to avenge the wrong done to the emperor and his dominions, and war was declared forthwith. An army of 60,000 men entered Lorraine, but the enemy had quitted the country before its arrival, and Otho pursued them up to the very gates of Paris, intending to expel Lothaire from his dominions. But an epidemic disease, which broke out among the German troops, and the vigorous resistance of Hugo Capet, obliged him to retreat. A peace, however, was concluded in 980, in which Lothaire renounced his claims to Lorraine.

When at length Otho II. had restored peace, and secured the northern and eastern frontiers of Germany, he thought it necessary to proceed to Italy, to put an end to the ever-renewed intrigues at Rome and in southern Italy. His real object was

no doubt, to strengthen his Italian possessions and extend his dominion over the whole of the peninsula. In the autumn of 980 he set out with a numerous and brilliant army, containing the flower of his German nobles ; he was also accompanied by the Empress Theophano and her infant son, who was only a few months old. He entered Rome without meeting with any resistance, and Crescentius, who had headed the party hostile to Otho, withdrew into a convent. Order was soon restored in northern and central Italy, but greater difficulties awaited him in the south. He had formed a plan of driving the Greeks entirely out of Apulia and the Saracens out of Calabria. He took the towns of Bari and Tarentum and gained possession of almost all Calabria, but he did not carry on the war with that caution and foresight which the circumstances required. The Byzantine court, fully aware of the danger, concluded a treaty with its natural enemy, the caliph of Cairo. The Saracens accordingly crossed over from Sicily, and having united with the Greeks, met Otho near Rossano in 982, where they were defeated. The emperor then advanced victoriously through the south-western mountains as far as Squillace. There his army gained a victory over the Greeks, but fell into an ambuscade of the Saracens, and was almost annihilated. The emperor himself was obliged to take to flight, and saved himself only by leaping into the sea and swimming to a ship, which was at anchor not far off, but unfortunately turned out to be a Greek vessel. A slave who recognised him, without saying who he was, prevailed upon the captain to admit the stranger. Otho promised the master of the ship to deliver up to him the emperor's treasures, if he would convey him in safety to Rossano. The proposal was accepted, and when the ship neared the town, Otho again dashed into the sea and safely reached the remnants of his army. But all was lost, and the defeat he had sustained was decisive. He returned to Rome, and on his arrival there learned that Otho, duke of Bavaria and Suabia, had died, and

that the malcontents were rising in all parts of Italy. At the same time, reports reached him of commotions among the Danes and Slavonians, who, on hearing of his defeat in Italy, had renounced Christianity, and renewed their attacks upon the German frontiers.

In these distressing circumstances he summoned, in 983, a diet at Verona. All his great vassals assembled around him, and having induced them to elect his son Otho (III.), who was only three years old, as his successor, he made several new arrangements in the empire and commenced preparations for wiping off the disgrace of Rossano. The election of a new pope rendered it necessary for him to stay some time at Rome, while his army proceeded to Beneventum. But misfortune had come upon him so suddenly, and in so many forms, that his health gave way : he fell into a bad fever, and died at Rome in December 983. The insurrection of the Slavonians had assumed an extremely dangerous aspect, for several episcopal sees were destroyed, and Magdeburg was threatened by an army of 30,000 men. In this extremity, the Saxon chiefs rallied and in a great battle saved the city ; but the country between the Elbe and the Oder was not recovered, and nearly two centuries passed away, before Christianity and the supremacy of the Germans were finally established on the north of the Elbe.

5. Although at his father's death Otho was only three years old, no one thought of disputing the hereditary right of the Saxon prince to the royal crown in Germany. But disputes did arise as to who should undertake the guardianship of the young king and the regency during his minority. Some thought that his mother Theophano should perform these duties, while others, opposed to her on account of her foreign origin, maintained that Duke Henry of Bavaria was the fittest person. The latter view was taken by the archbishop of Cologne, who at once liberated Henry from his captivity and delivered the young king into his hands. This act was stigmatized by a

party in Lorraine as tantamount to consigning the king to the hands of a jailer, and Theophano's claims were strongly supported in that quarter. King Lothaire of France also favoured this party at first, but taking advantage of the distracted state of Germany, attacked Lorraine. Henry of Bavaria made no secret of the fact that he himself aimed at the crown ; he actually succeeded in persuading some of the Saxon chiefs to proclaim him king at Quedlinburg, and obtained the support of the dukes of Bohemia and Poland, and of several other Slavonian princes. Germany was again threatened by the danger of a complete dissolution ; but the reckless conduct of Henry soon opened the eyes of his supporters to the mistake they had made. They now united to support Otho III., and sent messengers to his mother and grandmother to secure their co-operation. After an unsuccessful attempt to create a division among his opponents, Henry was obliged to withdraw into Bavaria, where he tried to win over the Franconians and Suabians. But in this also he failed, and had to deliver up the young king to his mother. Theophano and Adelaide now undertook the protection and training of the boy, and Henry's ambition was satisfied with having Bavaria restored to him. Theophano is said to have carried on the administration of Germany with great vigour and energy, and the country, which, only one generation before, could hardly be controlled by a man, which abounded in rude and defiant warriors, and in which many hostile interests were fiercely opposed to one another, was now governed in peace by a lady, whose chief counsellors were the Empress Adelaide and the abbess of Quedlinburg, the king's aunt. Theophano died in 991, but the king remained under the guidance of an excellent instructor whom she had chosen for him, and who not only inspired him with a love of learning, but managed the most important affairs of the kingdom, and vigorously protected Saxony against the Slavonians.

At the time of Otho's accession, his friends had been under

the necessity of giving up all thoughts of conquering southern Italy, and even in the central and northern parts tranquillity was not maintained without much difficulty. In 996, an embassy appeared before him from Rome, which was still distracted by factions, to invite him to take the imperial crown. Otho was then only sixteen years old, and enthusiastically caught at the idea which had been familiar to him from his infancy ; for he had often been told that he was destined by Providence to become emperor of the West. His grandmother seconded the invitation, and accompanied by a numerous retinue of German nobles, Otho proceeded to Rome. Shortly before his arrival, the holy see had become vacant, and the Roman clergy and people unanimously elected Bruno, upon the recommendation of Otho, to whom he was related. The new pope, who assumed the name of Gregory v., then anointed and crowned Otho emperor. The young prince had thus reached the summit of his ambition, and would gladly have remained at Rome for some time, had he not found its climate unsuited to him.

In 997, after having made an expedition against the Slavonians, he was once more called to Rome by disturbances which had broken out there. On his arrival, he established himself in the Castle St. Angelo and displayed inexorable strictness and severity in restoring order. After the death of Gregory v., he caused his former instructor, Gerbert, then bishop of Ravenna, to be elected to the papal throne, which he ascended in 999 under the name of Sylvester II. This extraordinary man, who was himself perhaps the most learned scholar of his age, constantly urged upon the young emperor the desirableness of restoring the ancient Roman empire in all its glory. Even Otho's earlier education had been too refined and ideal for the rough realities by which he was surrounded, and the young man lived in a perpetual dream of imperial greatness. Neglecting his own country, he thought Italy to be a kind of

sacred ground, on which civilisation and Christianity shook hands, although in reality it contained only the wrecks of both. In the same year, Otho made an expedition into southern Italy, apparently for the purpose of subduing the Greek towns of Campania. But the state of his health soon obliged him to return to Germany. From this time he began more and more to devote himself to religious exercises, by which he hoped to recover peace with himself and with God. This may to some extent have been the result of his impaired health, but the superstition of the time, no doubt, also contributed to it ; for it was then currently believed, that the end of the first thousand years since the birth of Christ would be signalized by the destruction of the world ; in consequence of which some plunged into the most reckless and extravagant enjoyment of their worldly possessions, while the more pious and thoughtful made them over to churches and convents. In the year 1000 he went to Rome for the third time, animated by a desire to restore the ancient empire and make the eternal city his permanent residence. This partiality for Rome and Italy caused much discontent among his own subjects, and he soon found out that the Romans were not the people he had imagined them to be in his heated imagination. Soon after his arrival, the Romans rose in open rebellion, and besieged the emperor in his palace on the Aventine. In 1001, he was obliged to flee from Rome, and a gloomy melancholy took possession of his mind ; he still hoped, however, to be able to subdue the Romans, and after that to end his life in a convent. But the Italian climate had undermined his constitution, and in the midst of his preparations against Rome, he died in January 1002. Otho III. had never been married, and died at the early age of twenty-two, without having made any arrangements for a successor, so that the throne of Germany, and with it the imperial crown, was vacant. He was the last of the direct descendants of Otho I. ; but one branch of the

Saxon family was still represented by Henry of Bavaria, a great-grandson of Henry I.

6. The election of a king of Germany now seemed to be left to the free choice of the nobles ; but Italy was not bound to submit to the man that might be chosen by the Germans. There was no lack of candidates : Henry of Bavaria, the great-grandson of Henry I., and a son of the Henry who had for a time acted as guardian of Otho III., claimed the succession, on the ground of his being the nearest relative of the late emperor ; but as the Bavarian branch had long since become estranged from their Saxon kinsmen, a Saxon chief like Eckhard of Meissen, who had been made duke of Thuringia by Otho III., might think himself better entitled to prefer his claim. During the obsequies of the late emperor, most of the German nobles promised their support to Duke Hermann of Suabia. The duke of Lorraine took no steps for the present, but resolved to wait his time. Eckhard was murdered by his personal enemies ; and Henry of Bavaria, being known as a pious man, was supported by the German clergy, and after having secured the goodwill of the Franconian nobles, was crowned king by the archbishop of Mayence. The Saxons, Lotharingians, and Suabians after some time recognised him, he having gained their confidence by liberal promises and concessions. The German crown, after considerable disputes, thus continued in the Saxon line. Boleslav, duke of Poland, who, after Eckhard's death, had risen in arms, continued the war, and not satisfied with receiving from the new king Lusatia as a fief, obtained, in 1018, after a protracted war, a peace in which he was obliged to give up the conquered duchy of Bohemia.

In disposing of the duchies in Germany, Henry II. was obliged to a greater extent than his predecessors to grant independence to the different tribes. In Lower Lorraine he had to maintain a protracted struggle before he succeeded in appointing a duke of his own choice. Henry, who on the whole was

more pious and benevolent than energetic, had great difficulty in restoring peace and order in his dominions. Rudolph, king of Burgundy, who was his mother's brother, had no children, and Henry would have inherited his kingdom, if he had lived longer.

Soon after the death of Otho III., when Henry was trying to secure his recognition in Germany, the Italians elected Harduin of Ivrea, king of Lombardy. But a party favourable to the German interest invited Henry II., who in 1004 crossed the Alps, routed Harduin, and was crowned king of Italy at Pavia. Harduin shut himself up in his fortress, and Henry, after having quelled an insurrection at Pavia, during which he saved his life only by jumping out of a window, returned to Germany. In 1013, being again solicited by the German party, which was then headed by Pope Benedict VIII., he marched with an army to Rome, where, the year after, he received the imperial crown. Harduin had in the meantime secured the interest of a number of followers, and now created an insurrection, which induced Henry to quit Italy. But Harduin himself soon after died in a convent, and henceforth no native Italian prince ever claimed the Lombard crown in opposition to a German king.

As Henry, though married, had no children, in consequence, it is said, of a vow of chastity, he had at an early period of his reign resolved upon devoting his possessions to the church and founding a bishopric at Bamberg; and when at last he carried out this plan, he endowed the see most liberally with his family estates. In 1020, Pope Benedict VIII. having gone to Bamberg for the purpose of consecrating the cathedral, prevailed upon Henry to undertake a third expedition to Italy to check the progress of the Greeks, who ever since their victory of Squillace had been extending their dominion in southern Italy. In the autumn of the following year, therefore, Henry crossed the Alps with a powerful army, for he himself was afraid, lest the city of Rome, and with it the empire

of the West, should fall into the hands of the Greeks. Naples, Salerno, and other towns, which had joined the Greeks, were speedily reduced to obedience. During these wars the first Normans arrived in southern Italy. They came as pilgrims from Normandy, but their services were enlisted by an Apulian chief of the name of Malo. Henry II., soon discovering their bravery and daring, assigned to them a district in Apulia, whereby he secured their assistance in any future wars against the Greeks. Their number within a short time increased so much by other Norman adventurers joining their brethren, that not only the Greeks but even the Lombards were obliged to recede before them. Thus two nations, which in the earliest times had dwelt side by side near the mouth of the Elbe, met again in the southern extremity of Italy. After having recovered a considerable portion of southern Italy, Henry himself returned across the Alps, but died at Grona, in 1024, at the age of fifty-two. The church of Rome has enrolled him and his queen Kunigunde among her saints. Throughout his reign the church remained faithful to him, and he rewarded her on the grandest scale, by making over to her whole counties, and granting extraordinary privileges.

7. The limits of the regal power in Germany were as yet not fixed by any law, and depended in most cases on the personal character of the ruler, and the influence derived from his family and possessions. The custom of dividing the kingdom among the surviving sons of a sovereign had ceased after the extinction of the Carlovingian race, and from the accession of the Saxon kings down to the reign of Henry IV., the kingdom was neither entirely elective nor hereditary; for the election by the great nobles was little more than a solemn recognition of the arrangements about the succession made by the preceding sovereign. An election, however, was unavoidable when a dynasty became extinct.

None of the Saxon kings had been able to realize the plan of

Charlemagne to abolish the national duchies, or to reduce the dukes to the condition of military officers of the crown. Henry I. had been obliged to win them over in his endeavours to restore the unity of Germany by large concessions. Otho I. had allowed a separate duke to every branch of the German nation, but in order to connect them with the central government, he reserved to himself the right of appointing them, and generally conferred the dignity on men connected with his own family or race ; at the same time, however, he secured his revenues and authority in the duchies by the appointment in each of a Count Palatine, who also represented the king in his capacity of supreme judge, and by the establishment of march counts (margraves), who had the military command in the frontier districts in the north and east. Lastly, he created a counterpoise against the great secular nobles by giving political powers to the clergy, which contributed not a little towards preserving the unity of the state, while at the same time the emperor's protectorate of the church exercised a powerful influence in maintaining her unity. The more the idea of the hereditary character of the monarchy became established, the less did the kings feel restrained in making their appointments and framing their measures. General diets of the nobles occurred but rarely during the Saxon period, for the king deliberated only with the highest secular and ecclesiastical nobles. Every tribe of the nation held its own national councils. These arrangements remained on the whole the same under the three Othos ; but the newly-appointed ducal families gradually acquired a firm footing in their respective provinces, and thus became, to some extent at least, the representatives of the national independence of the several tribes. Henry II., who owed his elevation to the ready recognition of some of the tribes, was obliged by this very circumstance to allow them greater independence ; and his want of strength in the internal administration also contributed to loosen the bonds which held the different tribes together.

The frontiers of Germany were extended under the Saxon kings, though their conquests were not always lasting. Lorraine, which had been united to Germany by Henry I., remained in this condition, although it was occasionally invaded by the French kings ; and the turbulent spirit of that province induced Otho II. to divide it into two duchies, Upper and Lower Lorraine. In the north of Germany the river Slie remained the frontier between it and Denmark. In the north-east, Otho I. had made the Slavonian tribes tributary as far as the Oder, and even seemed to have insured their conversion to Christianity, which Charlemagne had not even thought of attempting ; but in the reign of Otho II., the Slavonians, east of the Elbe, returned to their original condition and remained in it for nearly two centuries longer. Bohemia, Poland, and Carinthia remained Slavonian duchies under the supremacy of the German kings. The battle on the Lechfeld not only put an end to the predatory inroads of the Hungarians, but deprived them of the country about the Ens, which was soon occupied by German settlers and thus became the foundation of the east march or Austria. The south of Italy was only partially conquered.

The powers of the church were very materially increased during this period, partly by splendid donations, and partly by investing the bishops with the rank and office of counts within their dioceses. History scarcely presents any other example of such liberality towards the church as that displayed by the Saxon emperors. The bishops no longer received, as formerly, single farms or estates, but whole towns and counties ; and owing to the fact that within their own dioceses they were exempted from the ordinary jurisdiction, and obtained the office of count, they became in reality ecclesiastical princes, who attached themselves the more closely to the king, the more they were opposed by the dukes. It was as much policy as piety that impelled the Saxon kings to seek the protecto-

rate of the Roman Church by means of the imperial crown. The expeditions to Rome appeared to the rulers of Germany as a kind of religious duty, they alone being in a condition by means of the sword, to establish order in the western church. However much blood and treasure these expeditions may have cost, they were undoubtedly the result of the grand idea of uniting all Christendom in one compact body, and without them Germany could scarcely have become the centre from which Christianity was spread among the heathens of the north and east of Europe. It was owing to the connexion of Germany with Italy and the church that a higher civilisation was introduced among the Germans, and through them diffused among the neighbouring nations. The manners and customs of the German people, it is true, were not improved very rapidly, yet there was a manifest progress both in intellectual and material civilisation among the great mass of the people, as well as among the upper classes. Violence and superstitious ignorance were still the prevailing evils of the time, and could be suppressed only by the influence of a powerful and intelligent clergy. The nobles, whose life was almost wholly devoted to war and the chase, had higher and nobler objects placed before them by the church, though the clergy themselves, being great landed proprietors, were likewise bound to take an active part in war. The peaceful occupations of agriculture and industry were fostered chiefly by the example set in the monasteries. Towns also gradually sprang up in the countries north of the Danube and east of the Rhine, and prospered under the protection of castles, bishops, and convents.

The Saxons, the last of the German tribes that had adopted Christianity and its civilisation, clung most tenaciously to their national customs and institutions, but they had nevertheless made considerable progress. During the reign of the first two Saxon kings, mining was carried on to a great extent in the Hartz mountains, and produced a rich harvest of gold and

silver ; stone buildings became more numerous in place of the old wooden ones, and the beginnings of German ecclesiastical architecture may already be discerned ; and, lastly, the connexion with Italy had begun to make the people acquainted with luxuries, which alarmed the friends of the good times of old. Learning, to which a great impulse had been given by Charlemagne, flourished in the schools connected with the convents in all parts of Germany. The nun Roswitha of Gandersheim distinguished herself as a poetess by her sacred dramas ; and Notker, a monk of St. Gall, is the only man during the tenth century known to have endeavoured to make the Scriptures accessible to his countrymen by a German paraphrase of the Psalms. The Saxon period was especially rich in men among the higher clergy, who were distinguished for their wisdom in the management of public affairs no less than for their learning. Our knowledge of this period of German history is mainly based upon two Saxon historians, Widukind, a monk of Corvey, who wrote in Latin the history of the Saxons, and especially of their first two emperors ; and Thietmar, bishop of Merseburg, who made the later period down to the time of Henry II. the subject of a historical work.

8. As Henry II. had left no issue, a new election was unavoidable. A concurrence of extraordinary circumstances had once raised a Saxon chief to the regal and imperial crowns, and had rendered them practically hereditary in his family. Still, however, the prevailing notion was that the kingly dignity belonged to the Frankish race, and the state of Germany at that time was such as to give weight to this notion. For notwithstanding the great progress made by the Saxons, who then occupied nearly the whole of northern Germany, they were in many respects much behind the inhabitants of the southern part of the country. The latter had the advantage of a higher material civilisation and prosperity, for the influences of the Roman dominion in that part of the country had never

been entirely effaced : agriculture and industry were flourishing there, and the population was numerous and wealthy, while Saxony had only commenced its development. On the banks of the Rhine, in the very heart of the old Frankish territory, there existed a series of large and prosperous cities, while Saxony had as yet scarcely any town worth mentioning, with the exception of Magdeburg and the episcopal sees of Thuringia. Those Frankish cities, moreover, were at the same time centres of a higher civilisation, for Strasburg, Speier, Worms, Mayence, Trêves, Cologne, and others, were at the same time the seats of the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries of the kingdom. Lastly, since Italy and the imperial crown had become inseparably connected with the kingdom of Germany, and ideas of universal dominion had arisen out of that of the Western Empire, the centre of gravitation had imperceptibly been removed southward from the Elbe to the Rhine. Even the Saxon kings themselves had received their crown at Aix-la-Chapelle from the hands of Rhenish bishops, and had thereby in a manner recognised that country as the centre of the empire.

The condition of the kingdom immediately after the death of Henry II. showed still more than his disturbed reign that a strong and energetic ruler was needed. For instantly law and order began to be set at defiance : good men were thrown into a state of alarm and terror, and the wicked rejoiced at the uncertainty of everything. The heads of the church were particularly desirous to restore order by the speedy election of a new sovereign, but most of the lay princes were aiming at the highest dignity for themselves, and hoped to gain it by a display of brute force rather than by any mental or moral superiority, whence murders, robberies, and other crimes, were of daily occurrence in all parts of the empire. At last it was agreed that a meeting of all the great nobles of the kingdom, both lay and clerical, should be held in Rhenish Franconia, on the large plain between Worms and Mayence. The nobles

from the most distant parts of the country appeared, and the candidates were numerous. A selection was made of the most worthy, and their number was finally reduced to two Frankish chiefs, sons of two brothers, the dukes of Franconia and Carinthia. Both bore the name of Conrad, and were subjected to a most careful scrutiny. Each of the two promised to submit to whichever should be chosen, and on the proposal of Archbishop Aribio of Mayence, all the nobles agreed in electing the elder, Conrad of Franconia, who is commonly surnamed the Salian. Immediately after his election, he was anointed at Mayence, and then proceeded to Aix-la-Chapelle to take his seat on the throne of Charlemagne, whom he looked upon as his great model for imitation.

9. Conrad II. had not enjoyed any particular advantages of education, but a taste for knowledge had been imparted to him by his wife, the prudent and gifted Gisela. After a short stay at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he held a diet for regulating the affairs of the church and the state, he resolved to visit the different parts of his empire. During his progress he received the oath of allegiance from those chiefs who had not been present at his election, and did all he could to restore peace, order, and the authority of law, not allowing himself to be disturbed by the insurrection of the duke of Poland, who had assumed the title of king. In 1025, Italian ambassadors appeared before him at Constance, consisting of the heads of the German party, which, in opposition to a French faction, invited him to come to Italy and promised him its support. But other more pressing circumstances rendered it impossible for Conrad just then to cross the Alps. For Rudolph III. of Burgundy considered himself no longer bound by the arrangement made by Henry II., who was to have succeeded him in Burgundy; but Conrad was determined to increase his kingdom rather than diminish it, and to insist upon maintaining for it what had been conceded to his predecessor. The energy which he dis-

played in his attack on Burgundy, frightened the weak-minded Rudolph to such a degree, that he transferred the personal claims of Henry II. to the kingdom of Germany. A diet was then held in 1026, at which Conrad, in accordance with the wishes of the assembled nobles, declared his son Henry (III.), then eight years old, his successor, and made known his intention to undertake an expedition into Italy.

The French party in Italy had in the meantime tried to confer the crown of Italy upon a son of King Robert of France, and afterwards upon a son of William, duke of Aquitaine ; but Conrad, on his arrival, found that party almost broken up through the activity of his friends, the bishops of Lombardy. Pavia and Ravenna, however, had to be conquered by force of arms. Conrad was crowned king of Italy at Milan in 1026, but did not proceed to Rome until twelve months later, when he was proclaimed emperor. This solemnity was enhanced by the presence of two kings, Canute the Great of Denmark and England, and Rudolph III. of Burgundy. Being desirous to establish a friendly relation with the Danes, he ceded to Canute the country between the Eider and the Slie, which, after the establishment of Christianity in Denmark and the cessation of the Norman inroads, had ceased to be of any great importance to Germany. From Rome the emperor proceeded to the south of Italy, where the Lombard principalities of Benevento and Capua, with many other towns, submitted to him partly by compulsion, and partly of their own accord. Like his predecessors, Conrad established bands of Norman warriors there for the purpose of protecting the frontiers against the Greeks.

While the emperor was engaged in Italy, serious disturbances in Germany obliged him to return : the lawlessness of the great nobles in various parts threatened to produce dangerous commotions, but Conrad's energy speedily quelled all insurrectionary movements ; and, in 1028, he caused his son Henry to be crowned king at Aix-la Chapelle by the archbishop of

Cologne. Father and son, emperor and king, then undertook a journey through their dominions for the purpose of establishing peace everywhere on a solid basis. When this object was accomplished, Conrad thought it high time to compel the king of Poland to return to his allegiance. War was forthwith commenced ; but, in 1029, Conrad was obliged to discontinue it, because he had to chastise Stephen, king of Hungary, who had invaded the east march (Austria). In 1031, an internal feud in Poland led the king of that country to return to his allegiance to the German empire : Miesco, the son of Boleslav, appeared before the emperor and received from him Poland as a duchy, which, however, was reduced within narrower limits than before. Conrad was still engaged in regulating the affairs of Bohemia, which had also become disaffected, and other Slavonian tribes, when he received intelligence of the death of Rudolph III. of Burgundy, in 1032. He accordingly set out immediately to take possession of that kingdom in accordance with the arrangements made with the late king. The only one that opposed Conrad, was Count Odo of Champagne, a nephew of Rudolph ; but, in 1033, Conrad was declared king of Burgundy by all the higher and lower nobility of the country. Burgundy retained its constitution, in which the nobility and clergy had left to the king little more than his title. Burgundy henceforth remained an integral part of the German empire, which by this acquisition extended its boundaries to the Mediterranean, the Rhone, and the Saone.

The war against the Slavonians had in the meantime been continued by King Henry, Conrad's son ; he had first compelled Bohemia to submit, and then reduced the other Slavonian tribes, which had fallen back into paganism and had harassed the Saxon frontiers : they were now obliged to pay higher tribute than before. The emperor had not been in Italy for nearly ten years, and the country, being left to itself, had been thrown into great confusion by the ambitious schemes of the lay and clerical nobles.

The most powerful were the ecclesiastical princes, the secular nobility having been nearly destroyed during the feuds of the preceding century. Conrad felt that he required a counterpoise to the powerful and domineering clergy, and a favourable opportunity now presented itself for gaining this end. The vassals of the clerical chiefs were dissatisfied with the arbitrary manner in which their superiors often dealt with the fiefs granted to them ; and these inferior vassals had in the end formed a league, declaring that if the emperor would not assist them, they would by combination take justice into their own hands. While this conspiracy was spreading, Conrad, accompanied by his son Henry, undertook, in 1036, an expedition to Italy. At Pavia, he showed great severity towards several bishops, some of whom had always been his stanch supporters. His severity, however, only increased the revolutionary movement. Conrad was unable to take Milan, whose bishop he had imprisoned, and after having fearfully ravaged the surrounding country, was obliged, during the summer of 1037, to seek shelter in the Alpine valleys. Before entering upon this campaign, he had enacted a most important law, according to which all fiefs, the lower as well as the higher ones, became hereditary in the families to which they had been granted, unless there should be any legal impediment, or the whole body should in any particular case declare a son incapable of succeeding his father. The inferior vassals henceforth were no longer subject to the caprices and arbitrary decisions of the higher, and the king could always rely on the faithful attachment of the lower nobility against the higher. The same principle was acted upon by Conrad in Germany, though no special law was promulgated for the purpose. The higher clergy in Italy, on the other hand, now had a strong support in the towns which belonged to them, and which, under their mild rule, commenced a brilliant career of development, and soon surpassed all others in Christendom by their industry, their wealth, and their practical wisdom.

Conrad's ambition, like that of his great Saxon predecessors, was to extend his dominion over the whole of Italy ; and at the close of the summer of 1037 he crossed the Po. After having with his wonted rigour put down an insurrection at Parma, he proceeded towards Apulia. At Benevento and Capua he enacted some important laws, and settled disputes which had arisen between the natives and the Normans. After re-establishing law and justice in the towns of Apulia, he returned to Ravenna ; but being still unable to take Milan, and diseases having broken out in his army, he quitted Italy in 1038.

The disease raging among his soldiers carried off, among thousands of others, Hermann, duke of Suabia, and the emperor availed himself of the opportunity for assigning that duchy to his son Henry, who was already duke of Bavaria and king of Burgundy. The chief object of Conrad's internal policy was the complete abolition of the hereditary duchies, and he now felt strong enough seriously to undertake the task. When the duke of Carinthia died, no successor was appointed, and as Franconia had long been in the hands of the emperor, Henry at his father's death possessed no fewer than four duchies. The attachment of Lorraine was secured by giving it to a faithful friend. In Saxony alone, hereditary dukes still existed with a considerable degree of independence, and little remained to be done by Conrad's successor to reduce the ducal power to that of a mere officer of the crown, appointed by the king at his discretion. Conrad died, in June 1039, at Utrecht, after a very short illness. He had greatly extended and secured the frontiers of the empire ; he had strengthened the banks of the Elbe against the Slavonians, reduced Poland and Bohemia to obedience, checked the inroads of the Hungarians into the east march, and subdued the greater part of southern Italy. The kingly power within his German dominions was likewise considerably increased, partly by making the inferior vassals

hereditary, and partly by connecting the duchies with the crown. In addition to this, he allowed the march counties to become hereditary, as the ordinary counts had been long before, and by this means the king's power acquired much positive support. The secular authority of the bishops was raised by Conrad in Germany as well as in Italy, but without that lavish liberality which the Saxon emperors had displayed towards the church, and by which she had acquired an alarming preponderance in all important questions. Conrad generally selected the best and ablest men for the vacant bishoprics, and endeavoured to raise the episcopal cities by commercial privileges, but at the same time he was not unfrequently guilty of simony. In regard to the papal elections which occurred during his reign, he did not exercise all the influence he might have done ; and it must be owned that during his government, though otherwise prudent and energetic, he did not bestow as much attention upon the affairs of the church as he might and perhaps ought to have done. In this respect he was surpassed by his son.

10. Henry III. had been excellently educated by his illustrious mother Gisela, while from his father he inherited the vigour and energy which had been called into play at an early period of his life, as he had been obliged to take his place in the camp as well as in the council. A fearful famine, which raged from 1028 to 1030, seems to have made a deep impression on him, and to have given his mind a somewhat serious turn. When, in 1039, at the age of twenty-two, he ascended the throne, he at once showed a firm determination to establish a truly Christian order of things both in his empire and in the church, which had much degenerated during the reign of his father.

His accession was recognised in Germany without opposition, but he was nevertheless involved at the very outset in wars, which afforded him opportunities of displaying his skill and strength ; and the success with which his efforts were crowned

confirmed him in the prosecution of his great schemes. The duke of Bohemia had just then attacked Poland, which had for some time been in a state of internal disorganization, and the aggressor, in addition to this, neglected to do homage to the new king of Germany. Henry III., therefore, in the very year of his accession, marched against the Bohemian rebel; but for the present he was satisfied with receiving the son of the duke as a hostage, his presence being required in Bavaria, which had been invaded by King Peter of Hungary. In 1040, he held a diet in Suabia, where he received the homage of all the great nobles of the empire, and among them also of the bishop of Milan, whereby he was at once recognised as king of Italy. When the business of the diet was settled, Henry marched with a strong army against Bohemia, whose duke refused to restore the treasures he had carried off from Poland. At first Henry was repulsed with considerable loss, and even obliged to give up the hostages; but during a second campaign, in 1041, he was more successful and completely subdued the duke.

Meanwhile King Peter of Hungary, the successor of St. Stephen, had been expelled by his rival Aba. Peter was a son of Stephen's sister, but as his father was a foreigner, the Hungarians, having a dislike for him, elected Aba in his stead. Peter fled to Henry, who took him under his protection, and in 1042 made a ravaging inroad into Hungary. But after two campaigns he abandoned the contest, leaving for the present the throne to Aba and receiving a portion of the Hungarian territory. From Hungary, Henry turned to the south-west of his dominions. The year 1043 was one of great scarcity and distress in Germany: in order to alleviate the sufferings of his subjects, he followed the example set by France during the great famine of 1031, and induced all his nobles to observe what was called a peace or truce of God (*treuga Dei*), whereby they were compelled to abstain from the use of arms from

Wednesday evening to Monday, as well as during Advent and Lent. The main object of this regulation was to put a stop, by the authority of the church, to the practice of men taking justice into their own hands, which was then the most common mode of procedure among the rude and warlike nobles. Wherever this peace was violated, Henry stepped in with all his energy ; but he did not succeed everywhere, and least of all among the Saxons, who were still addicted to their ancient violent practices. During this period the king married Agnes, a daughter of William of Aquitaine, whose support he thereby hoped to secure against the turbulent nobles of Burgundy. In the summer of 1044, he once more marched against Hungary, and after defeating Aba, and restoring Peter to his throne, returned to Germany in triumph. In the year following, Peter acknowledged himself the vassal of Henry, so that Germany was now surrounded on the east by three great vassal states, Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, a circumstance which opened the way for the introduction of western civilisation into those countries.

During the first period of Henry's reign, when he was engaged in foreign wars, he had found it necessary, for the sake of the general peace, to restore the three southern duchies of Bavaria, Suabia, and Carinthia ; he did not, however, appoint any native chiefs, but gave the duchies to his most faithful adherents, nor do the powers of the office appear to have been as extensive as before. In Saxony alone, the dukes still maintained, at least to some extent, their ancient importance, being regarded as the national chiefs, who ruled by the will of the people, under the supremacy of the king ; and the ancient ducal family was left in the hereditary possession of its dignity. In all the other parts of Germany, the dukes were no more than officers appointed by the king ; they were constantly changed, and their places were often left vacant for a long time. If Henry had made the settlement of this subject one of the chief

aims of his administration, most important results might have been produced ; but unfortunately he treated it only as a secondary matter, his mind being more thoroughly bent upon the idea of realizing a great western empire, than upon consolidating his own kingdom. When the peace of Germany was secured, he resolved to undertake an expedition to Italy for the purpose of receiving the imperial crown ; and the plan was carried out, notwithstanding the information that Peter of Hungary had again been expelled, and that Andrew, a descendant of the ancient dynasty, had been raised to the throne. In the autumn of 1046 he hastened to Rome, which was in a state of extreme confusion in consequence of the factions of the nobles, and of the unworthy creatures they had raised to the papal throne.

Ever since the deposition of John XII. by Otho I., the Roman see had always been in some connexion with the rulers of Germany, and all the successors of Otho had received the imperial crown from the hands of a pope. The emperors, after the time of Leo VIII., had always exercised a more or less direct influence on the election of the popes, it being a matter of importance to the emperors that the occupant of the holy see should be either a friend, or at least a man that would not oppose them, but acknowledge their supremacy. The popes of the period from Otho I. down to the year 962 contrast very favourably with their predecessors, a proof that real piety and learning were then not altogether disregarded in raising men to the highest ecclesiastical dignity. But how much this restoration of order and discipline depended upon the direct interference of the emperor, and how little the internal condition of the church, especially at Rome, had become settled and consolidated, was made manifest in the reign of Henry II., and still more in that of Conrad II. The former did not possess the power required to keep down the factions of the great Roman nobles, who regarded the papacy, so to speak, as their own proper domain, and degraded it more than any other human institution

of the time. The consequence was, that the counts of Tuscia acquired a predominant influence at the papal elections, and all the abominations put down by Otho I. were revived and even increased. Pope Benedict IX., for example, that he might be able to marry, sold his office to a common priest ; the latter, who assumed the name of Gregory VI., soon found his position endangered by a rival pope, Sylvester III., and, not long after, Benedict also was persuaded by his own family to give up the plan of marrying and resume his papal functions. Henry III., who, on his arrival in Rome, found these three rival popes, resolved with his usual energy to put an end to the scandal. A synod was forthwith assembled at Sutri, and the three popes were deposed, Gregory VI. declaring himself unworthy of the office because he had acquired it by simony. Shortly after, a synod assembled at Rome unanimously declared, that, whereas the Romans had abused their right to elect the pope, King Henry III. and all his successors should be invested, like Charlemagne, with the title of Roman Patricius, and that by virtue of this title, they should conduct the election of the popes. Hereupon Henry caused the bishop of Bamberg, a descendant of a noble Saxon family, to be raised to the papal see under the name of Clement II., who in return, in 1047, placed the imperial crown on Henry's head. Henceforth the emperor kept a watchful eye upon Rome, and succeeded in raising to the holy see a succession of men, all Germans by birth, who seriously set to work to remove the abuses and irregularities which disgraced the church everywhere and especially at Rome. They themselves set the example of Christian piety and upright conduct, and thereby exercised an influence that was felt far and wide, though they had to contend with difficulties created by the very men who ought to have supported them.

When these affairs were settled, the emperor proceeded to southern Italy, subdued some of the rebellious nobles, distributed the provinces according to his own pleasure, and appointed

dukes of the Normans, who had already much increased in numbers and in power. After the emperor's return to Germany, a synod was convened for the express purpose of putting an end to simony, a vice which prevailed at that time to an almost incredible extent, but nowhere more than at Rome itself. All the rulers of that period, not even excepting the otherwise earnest and strict Henry III., indulged in the sinful practice, which, originating in trifles of a very natural character, had gradually overspread all Christendom. The temptation lay in the fact, that through its political power the church had risen to the rank of the first vassal in the Christian states. In making ecclesiastical appointments, every secular ruler might, as in the granting of other fiefs, lawfully declare that he would give them only to such persons as were agreeable to himself. As the prospect of gaining a high ecclesiastical position was extremely tempting, the aspirants endeavoured by both lawful and unlawful means to make themselves agreeable. At first costly presents were given voluntarily, but in the course of time such presents were regarded as an established custom, which no one ought to neglect, and which the secular rulers could the less dispense with, as their own possessions had been much reduced by their liberality towards the church itself. Simony thus became a convenient means of recovering at least a portion of what their predecessors had squandered, and at the same time a permanent source of revenue. In quarters where conscientious scruples were not completely silenced, as at the court of Henry III., care was at least taken not to give appointments indiscriminately to any one coming with a full purse, and a certain degree of character and ability was there demanded in addition to the money. Those who had purchased high ecclesiastical offices in this manner, naturally afterwards endeavoured to indemnify themselves by selling the inferior places at their disposal in like manner to others ; for in the lower spheres, too, money decided everything. The evil was nowhere so glaring as

at Rome, where literally everything was to be had for money, even under well-disposed popes ; and wherever they tried to check the abuse, they found the greatest obstacle in the inveterate habit of their subjects, and perhaps also in the poverty of their church, nearly all her rich estates having fallen into the hands of insolent vassals. It was against this vice of simony that, in 1047, a German synod first sent forth its protest, in which the Emperor Henry III. himself promised on oath to abstain from it. For five years he now remained in Germany, chiefly residing in Saxony, and always paying the greatest attention to the reforms in the church, which he endeavoured to effect partly by seeing that the papal and episcopal sees were occupied by worthy men, and partly by keeping a watchful eye upon the conduct of the clergy, whose proper training for their spiritual functions was an object of great anxiety to him.

After the pontificate of Clement II., who died in 1047, the emperor in the course of nine years had thrice an opportunity of filling the papal see with men of his own choice. Whenever a vacancy occurred, the Roman people sent ambassadors to him, requesting him by virtue of his title of Patricius to nominate a successor. He invariably chose men known for their learning and piety, and the Roman people readily recognised the pope thus elected. The bishops and archbishops of the empire continued as before to be appointed by the emperor, who conscientiously kept his promise to abstain from simony. Leo IX. (1049-1054), one of the popes raised by Henry III., made the greatest efforts to improve the moral conduct of the clergy, which had roused indignation in various parts of the empire, especially among the Benedictine monks. It was under this pontificate that Hildebrand (afterwards Gregory VII.) began as sub-deacon to guide the councils of the papal court. Leo himself was almost always travelling, from Apulia to Saxony, and from Burgundy to Hungary, everywhere exerting himself to eradicate the vice of simony, and to check the

licentious conduct of the clergy. At a synod held at Mayence, a monkish party went so far in its zeal for moral reform, as to demand that the clergy should live in celibacy, but the proposal met with no favour either there or in Italy. Henry III. himself attached no importance to such a measure, though he supported all endeavours to improve ecclesiastical and monastic discipline.

Some of the schools connected with the episcopal sees and monasteries were at this period in a flourishing condition. Monasteries had generally two schools attached to them, an inner one to train monks and priests, and an outer one to educate the sons of the laity, especially young nobles and princes. The arts of music, painting, and embroidery were likewise cultivated in the monasteries. The better religious life which was now reviving under the influence of pope and emperor, also called forth fresh zeal to extend Christianity among the heathens. Bishop Adalbert of Bremen succeeded in converting the Abodritae on the north of the Elbe, and erected three new bishoprics in their country. This religious zeal, however, unfortunately also gave rise to persecution of heretics, of which no instances occur during the period of the Saxon emperors.

Henry III. had much trouble in restoring order in Lorraine; and when at last this object was attained, he began, in 1051, to turn his attention to Hungary, where King Andrew I. had become involved in disputes with the count of the east march. After two campaigns, Andrew obtained peace by certain promises, but did not keep them, and the emperor was unable to compel him to acknowledge his supremacy. The Hungarian king was even joined by Conrad, duke of Bavaria; and when the latter went so far as to refuse to recognise the emperor's son Henry (IV.) as his successor, he was stripped of his duchy.

In 1055, Henry III. was obliged once more to go to Italy, being invited by Pope Victor II., the successor of Leo IX., to come to his aid against the Normans, who were extending their

dominion over southern Italy in the most violent manner. But before Henry reached Rome, he was called back by disturbances in Germany. After settling some disputes in Carinthia and Saxony, he proceeded to Lorraine, for it was there that serious outbreaks had occurred, and Henry I. of France was trying to avail himself of the opportunity for conquering the country. The emperor had an interview with the king at Ivois, and when the latter demanded the surrender of Lorraine, which, he said, had been fraudulently taken possession of by Germany, the emperor offered to settle the dispute by single combat, from which the French king is reported to have escaped by an ignominious flight.

The state of Germany at this time was anything but satisfactory: famine again broke out in some parts, simony still continued to be practised every now and then, Hungary had emancipated itself, and disturbances broke out in Bohemia, Saxony, and elsewhere, the powerful nobles chafing at the necessity of keeping the peace and at the arbitrary manner in which the emperor disposed of the duchies. All this showed that Henry was still very far from having accomplished the union and consolidation of Germany. On receiving intelligence of a great victory gained by a Slavonic tribe, he was seized with an illness of which he died in October 1056, at the early age of thirty-nine.

11. The succession of Henry IV., who was now scarcely six years old, was at first not disputed by any one, and his mother Agnes, with the consent of the nobles, undertook his education and guardianship. But soon the smouldering discontent of the Saxons with the strict rule of the late king broke out into open sedition; their chiefs held frequent meetings, discussing the grievances they had been obliged to submit to under Henry III., and came to the conclusion that the best way of avenging themselves would be to exclude his son from the succession. The revolt, however, was quelled by a cousin of the young king.

Agnes, hoping to establish a permanent support for herself, made the duchies of Suabia and Carinthia hereditary ; and she seems to have been actuated by the same motive when, a few years later, she gave the duchy of Bavaria to the Saxon Otho of Nordheim.

In 1057, Pope Stephen ix., who had been elected without the king's sanction, sent Hildebrand, then abbot of a Roman monastery, and other ambassadors to the German court. As Stephen died very soon after his elevation, a party at Rome conferred the title of Patricius on the count of Tusculum ; by virtue of this, the count elected a new pope, who, however, did not meet with the necessary support even at Rome. The dominant party in the city, therefore, sent a fresh embassy to Germany, requesting King Henry iv. to appoint a pope. Nicholas II., nominated by the king, was readily recognised at Rome on the advice of Hildebrand, now the soul of every measure of the Roman court. Nicholas, who had hitherto lived in monastic retirement, had quietly prepared himself for his exalted position. Although, like his predecessors, he owed his elevation to the German king, his endeavours all pointed in one direction,—the elevation of the church above all secular powers ; but this object was not attained until the pontificate of Hildebrand. What the popes aimed at was felt more or less to be a necessity by the better part of the laity as well as of the clergy. In the year 1059, Nicholas made a regulation of the utmost importance : hitherto no fixed rules had existed as to the method of electing the head of the church, while the mode of filling up all other ecclesiastical offices was regulated by well-known laws. This circumstance had been one of the main causes of the frequent degradations of the papal dignity, and of dangerous confusion throughout Christendom. All that hitherto had been fixed by ancient usage was, that the clergy of the diocese of Rome, combined with the people, had the right of electing the pope ; everything else was undecided, and was left in

each case to accidental circumstances and influences. Hence it happened that a powerful family might with little difficulty obtain a sort of hereditary possession of the pontificate, without appearing to violate any of the formalities customary at elections. On the proposal of Nicholas, a Roman synod now declared that in future the pope should be elected by the principal clergymen (cardinals) of the city of Rome and its neighbourhood, with the consent of the people, and with a due regard to the rights of the king of Germany and his successors. By this law the part of the people was reduced to the mere form of acclamation, and the election was virtually vested in a compact aristocratic corporation, which itself consisted of men appointed by the pope. The pope was thus placed in the same relation to the cardinals, in which the bishops had for centuries stood to the chapters. This measure protected the papacy on the one hand against the debasing influence of the factions of the Roman nobles, and on the other against any arbitrary and capricious interference on the part of the German kings. Henry III. would unquestionably have opposed the decree, but those who conducted the government in the name of his successor were too much occupied with other affairs to pay attention to a measure which had the further advantage of being framed in perfect accordance with all canonical forms. Immediately after the death of Nicholas, in 1061, the Roman nobility tried to upset the new law and force the appointment of a pope of their own choice against Alexander II., who had been elected in accordance with the decree of the synod. The nobles were supported by a numerous class opposed to the improved order and discipline of the church, and in fact to all reforms, which were either begun or announced; this class consisted of a large body of the higher and lower clergy, and many also of the nobility, and was strengthened even by the influence of the court of Henry IV. Matters nearly came to a schism in the church; but still Alexander II. maintained himself, not

indeed by spiritual weapons alone, but by the decision of the sword, which, at least for a time, paralysed the factions of the Roman nobility.

During these ecclesiastical troubles, Agnes had not been able to assert her protectorate of the church ; her authority suffered still more in another quarter, for she endeavoured in vain to secure the throne of Hungary to Andrew I., who had solicited her assistance. Opposition also was manifested in various parts of Germany to her guardianship, and Hanno, archbishop of Cologne, conspired with other chiefs to take the young king out of his mother's hands. Hanno, under the pretext of showing the boy a newly-built ship, carried him off from the island of Kaiserswerth, near Düsseldorf, as his prisoner. When Henry, now about twelve years old, discovered his real position, he jumped into the river, but was rescued and carried to Cologne under flattering promises. Hanno tried to disguise the odious character of his deed and proclaimed that the bishop, in whose diocese the king was staying, should conduct the affairs of the kingdom. Hanno was a man of undoubted piety, and endeavoured to do all he could for what he considered to be the good of the church and the state, but he was of a very irascible temper ; this peculiarity made him unfit to be an educator, and he was unable to win the affections of the boy, who had already been much spoiled by his mother. Hanno shared the administration of the kingdom with the ambitious Duke Otho of Bavaria. Adalbert, archbishop of Bremen, who also took an active part in the education of the young king, knew so well how to insinuate himself, that, in 1063, while Hanno was absent on a journey, he obtained complete possession of the pupil and carried him to Bremen. He contrived to win his attachment by every kind of indulgence, and set up a most luxurious establishment for him. As soon as the young king, with the ardour of youth, expressed a desire to hold the reins of government himself, the archbishop,

in 1065, caused him to be declared of age, though he still continued to exercise the greatest influence over him. As Adalbert, through his desire to be independent of the Saxon dukes and counts, had made these chiefs his enemies, he fostered in the young king's breast an implacable hatred of the Saxons, a task which he found all the easier, as there had always existed an ill feeling between the Franconians and Saxons. Several forts were erected in Saxony and garrisoned with Franconian troops, who were obliged to gain the means of living by predatory inroads into the neighbouring country. The splendour and luxuries with which Adalbert surrounded himself and the king soon exhausted the treasury, and in order to supply the deficiency, simony was again resorted to on a great scale, though from fear of the pope it was not so much practised in the appointment of bishops as in that of abbots to wealthy abbeys. Henry with boyish levity sanctioned everything which Adalbert proposed.

In the autumn of 1065 Henry iv. took up his residence at Goslar, near which he had erected for himself an impregnable stronghold (the Hartzburg). His reckless mode of living and the arbitrary proceedings of Adalbert called forth the deepest indignation. The chiefs, guided by Hanno of Cologne, held a meeting, at which the king was compelled, in a tumultuous manner and by threats of deposition, to remove Adalbert and the other supporters of his tyranny from the court. After this Adalbert was forced by the Saxon nobles to give them a considerable portion of his ecclesiastical domain as fiefs, and several of the Slavonian tribes renounced Christianity. Hanno, who was now again at the head of affairs, endeavoured to wean the king from his dissolute habits, by inducing him to marry Bertha, a daughter of the margrave of Susa; but Henry, preferring his courtesans, completely neglected her, and after a few years even attempted to obtain a divorce. He tried to secure the assistance of the archbishop of Mayence in this scheme, by

promising to support the odious claim of that prelate to the tithes of Thuringia; but the opposition of Pope Alexander II. obliged him to give up the attempt. At a later period we find a good understanding subsisting between Henry and Bertha, who by her silent suffering and faithful attachment seems in the end to have secured his affections.

When Henry IV. found that the archbishop of Mayence could be of no assistance to him, he recalled Adalbert of Bremen, after an absence of three years, to his court at Goslar, where the archbishop remained his sole counsellor from 1069 until his death in 1072. Under his guidance Henry became involved in serious difficulties with the Saxons. At the bishop's instigation, he deprived Otho of Bavaria of his duchy, and caused his estates to be ravaged, on the unfounded charge that the duke had formed a plan to assassinate the king. Bavaria was given to Guelph IV., while Otho took refuge with his brother Magnus in Saxony. Henry had to maintain Guelph in his new duchy by force of arms, being vigorously opposed by Otho; in 1071, however, Otho concluded a truce with the king, and both he and Magnus surrendered and were for the present kept in custody. After the death of Adalbert of Bremen, Otho obtained his freedom by ceding a large portion of his estates to the king; but Magnus was kept in captivity, no choice being left to him but either to give up all his family claims to the hereditary possession of the duchy of Saxony or to remain a prisoner. All attempts at mediation failed, and Henry concluded a treaty or alliance with the Danish king Sweyn, which was evidently aimed at Saxony; and at the same time took possession of the castle of Lüneburg, the hereditary seat of the ducal family of Saxony. He further collected a large army under the pretext of an expedition into Poland, the real object being to reduce Saxony by main force; but in the spring of 1073 the great Saxon nobles assembled an army of 60,000 men, determined either to

die or to recover their ancient freedom. At first a deputation was sent to Henry, remonstrating with him for his immoral conduct, and demanding of him to dismiss his advisers and allow his subjects to live in freedom according to the laws of their ancestors. As Henry evaded a decisive answer, the Saxons at once surrounded Goslar, and Henry withdrew to the Hartzburg. Further negotiations led to no results, and the king was besieged in his castle. His fair promises made the besiegers relax their exertions and watchfulness, and one night Henry, with a few followers, escaped. For several days he wandered about the forests, until at last he reached a detachment of his army. It was at first in vain that he implored the princes on his knees to avenge the insult offered to his person as an offence against the kingdom. At length, however, it was resolved to make preparations for a great expedition against Saxony. Meanwhile many of Henry's forts in Saxony were demolished, and the garrison at Lüneburg was so hard pressed that the king, for the purpose of saving it, was obliged to restore Magnus to freedom, which caused great joy in Saxony. While the Danes and some Slavonic tribes, at the king's instigation, were commencing hostilities against Saxony, the archbishop of Mayence summoned a meeting of the principal bishops and chiefs of the kingdom, for the purpose of bringing about a reconciliation; but the whole assembly was so thoroughly convinced of the justice of the cause of the Saxons, that every one made up his mind privately that the king ought to be deposed and a more worthy prince be elected in his stead. When at length all kinds of charges were brought against Henry, when it was even said that he had hired assassins to murder the princes, and the archbishop of Mayence was already maturing the plan of proposing Rudolph of Suabia as the future king of Germany, Henry, in great despair, proceeded to the Franconian town of Worms, which was still attached to him and prepared him a splendid reception. He took up his residence among the faith-

ful burghers and sent messengers to all parts of the kingdom, imploring the chiefs to assist him against the rebellious Saxons. Many bishops, obeying the summons, appeared before him, but the archbishop of Mayence and all the dukes declared that they would not take up arms for the oppression of the innocent. As, however, the Saxons had not been very successful in their attempts to take and destroy the king's strongholds, and were still besieging the Hartzburg, a preliminary arrangement was made in the camp at Gerstungen, in 1074, to ratify which Henry himself went to Goslar. He was there obliged to make the humiliating promise to demolish all his fortresses in Saxony, and grant all the demands of the Saxons ; but as soon after he tried to evade his engagements, he was again besieged by his enemies and forced to carry them into effect, and to restore Otho to his duchy of Bavaria. Scarcely had he returned to Worms, when the populace of Saxony, indignant at the incomplete demolition of the Hartzburg, rose in arms, and not only destroyed the hated stronghold, but pulled down the church and all the buildings connected with it. The Saxon chiefs punished the perpetrators of this sacrilege, and sent an embassy to Henry to assure him that the crime was not sanctioned by them ; but the king, unconcerned about this, brought an accusation against them before Pope Gregory VII. The latter, in his reply, reminded Henry of the simony practised in his dominions, and called upon him to depose all priests guilty of the offence. This was a welcome handle for Henry, who thought that it would afford him an easy means of getting rid of his opponents among the clergy. He kept his plans secret, however, until, in the spring of 1075, when, after gaining over by entreaties and promises nearly all classes of his subjects in southern Germany, he had assembled a more numerous army than had ever been seen in Germany. With this army he suddenly and unexpectedly invaded Saxony, and after having in the first encounter completely defeated his opponents, he advanced upon

Halberstadt and Goslar ; and, in the autumn of the same year, the most powerful among the Saxon and Thuringian chiefs surrendered to him. All were put in safe custody, and at Christmas a meeting of princes assembled at Goslar to deliberate upon the fate of the prisoners, whose life and property had been guaranteed to them at the time of their surrender. The assembled nobles, at Henry's request, recognised his son Conrad, a child of only one year old, as his lawful successor ; and the king became reconciled to Otho of Bavaria, who gave up his two sons as hostages and soon after received the administration of all Saxony. But the other nobles remained for the present in captivity.

12. When Alexander II. died in 1073, a concourse of people immediately appeared in the streets of Rome, clamorous for the elevation of Hildebrand, who had already, during the reign of five popes, been the mainspring of all the measures that were adopted by them. As Hildebrand himself declined the honour of being elevated to the papacy, Cardinal Hugo reminded the people that no man had done more than Hildebrand to raise the papal authority, and that therefore no man in Christendom was more deserving of the honour than he. Amid a tumultuous uproar, Hildebrand was conveyed to the chair of St. Peter, and the cardinals afterwards went through the election as a mere matter of form. Hildebrand assumed the name of Gregory VII., and instead of soliciting the sanction of the German king, he only sent him notice of the fact of his election, whereby, according to the views of the strict clerical party, he fully complied with the law enacted by Nicholas II. at his own suggestion. Henry IV. did indeed despatch ambassadors to inquire into the election, but was satisfied with the declaration of the new pope, that he had deferred his consecration until the arrival of the king's sanction.

Ever since the time of Pepin, the popes had been anxious to efface the disagreeable recollection of the origin of their secular

power, which was based upon the territorial grant made by Pepin to the holy see. A document, therefore, was manufactured, in which the Emperor Constantine made over Rome and Italy to Bishop Sylvester. The forged nature of this document is now so generally acknowledged, that for more than three hundred years no one has ventured to defend its genuineness. Another means to raise the papal authority and the power of the church was afforded by what are called the Decretals of Isidorus. There had existed for a long time a collection of ecclesiastical laws, named after the Spanish bishop Isidorus; but during the first half of the ninth century, their number was increased by about one hundred spurious decretals, which were ascribed to Roman bishops of the first four centuries. These forged decretals represent the clergy as entirely emancipated from the state, and the pope as the highest legal and judicial authority. Pope Nicholas I. was the first who ventured to act upon the authority of these forged documents; and the way was thus paved for an ambitious pontiff, in favourable circumstances, to place himself above all secular sovereigns in Christendom.

Gregory soon after his accession declared his determination to eradicate simony from the church, without any regard to the persons who might be guilty, and to re-establish in their full force the ecclesiastical laws respecting the celibacy of the priesthood. This announcement made the most profound sensation throughout the Christian world, not so much on account of the sentiments it contained, as on account of the sharp and decided language in which it was clothed, and every one knew what to expect from the stern and inflexible character of Gregory. All Christendom was rent into two parties, the reformers, who sided with Gregory, and his opponents, who insisted upon keeping things as they were. The former consisted of a large number of zealous priests and monks; and the laity, so far as personal or selfish interests did not interfere, were inclined to

support them, not because the laity were better or more moral than the clergy, but because they thought it only fair to demand greater purity and holiness in those who claimed spiritual superintendence over them. Among the persons who faithfully supported Gregory in his schemes of reform, none was more zealous than Matilda, countess of Tuscia, who possessed most of the towns in Tuscany, many also in Lombardy, and large estates in Lorraine. She was a woman of profound piety, and devoted with her whole soul to the papacy and the reforms proceeding from it. She was well versed in the art of government, of indefatigable activity, great courage, and extraordinary perseverance. For a period of thirty years, down to the last day of her life, she supported Gregory with unabated zeal, and a suspicion naturally arose, though it was entirely without foundation, that the connexion between the countess and the pope was not of the purest kind. The party opposed to Gregory, embracing many priests as well as laymen, whose guilty conscience stirred them up against all attempts to suppress simony, relied upon the great mass of the lower clergy, who were generally married, and upon their families. It must be owned that, on the whole, Gregory VII. was supported by public opinion, and had it been otherwise, the church would have fallen to pieces, or would have been thrown into a state of inextricable confusion.

Gregory left the carrying out of the law concerning the celibacy of the priests to the several Christian states, which readily complied with his demand, though not with that strictness and rapidity which the pope desired. He himself took up the contest against simony. He was a monk from conviction, and, like many zealots of the time, believed that monkish abstinence conferred a higher degree of sanctity upon a priest—a notion quite in accordance with the views entertained by the great mass of the people, who revered an unmarried priest much more than a married one. But although Gregory to

some extent viewed the question in the same light, it is undeniable that political motives were of equal weight with him. Many noble-minded and intelligent men opposed the law of celibacy on moral grounds, when he declared the marriage of a priest to be mere concubinage. An ecclesiastical council, held at Paris in 1074, resolved not to obey the pope's decree, because it was irrational; and in France, England, and Spain, it was found advisable at least not to force the priests who were already married to give up their wives. In the same year a body of priests, holding a synod at Erfurt, called on the people openly to resist the decree about celibacy, and learned men proved the pope to be a heretic in commanding things which he was entitled only to recommend. But his edict was irrevocable, and he peremptorily insisted upon priests being nothing but priests, so that on entering their order they might at once break off all connexions with their families and the state and be independent of both. At a synod held at Rome, in 1075, Gregory declared all official functions performed by married priests and those guilty of simony to be invalid.

While these measures were being carried out in the various states, Gregory himself began an active crusade against simony. The practice of buying and selling ecclesiastical offices was indeed so disgraceful and immoral, that no one ventured to come forward in defence of it; but Gregory, not satisfied with deposing guilty priests, caused at the above-mentioned Roman synod the decree of Nicholas II., that no priest should accept a charge from the hand of a layman, to be altered in this manner, that whoever had received an ecclesiastical benefice from the hand of a layman should be bound to resign it, and that all secular rulers, from the lowest to the highest, including the emperor himself, who dared to invest any one with an ecclesiastical office, should be excommunicated. This decree opened the great dispute about the right of investiture, which lasted for about half a century. Hitherto the general

custom had been for the ruler of any country to appoint the clergy of his dominions and induct them into their offices and estates according to his own pleasure ; not only was this practice now abolished, but even the right of sanctioning or rejecting an ecclesiastical appointment made by the authority of the church, was denied to the secular rulers. This measure, therefore, at once did away with every kind of superintendence of the church by the state ; it had from the first been the end and aim of all Gregory's labours, for by it he hoped not only to free the church from the power of the state, but to raise her above all the sovereigns of Christendom.

13. Vehement as Gregory was, and firm even to obstinacy in the contest for the grand idea of making the church supreme above all earthly powers, but at the same time yielding in secondary matters, if by so doing he could make his main object surer of attainment, he levelled his main shafts against Henry iv. of Germany, who in point of rank was the first prince in the Christian world, and whom he expected to find more pliable, because he knew him to be anxiously looking for the imperial crown. Gregory was also well informed of the disturbed state of Germany, and knew what advantages he might derive from it. Henry iv. had indeed conquered the Saxons, yet his victory had only weakened his cause ; for he followed it up without any regard to good faith and without the most ordinary caution. As after his victory he paid no attention to his former promises to reform the abuses in the church of Germany, Gregory vii., although Henry was not more to blame in this respect than other princes, addressed him in a haughty and commanding tone, calling upon him at once and without delay to carry the papal decrees into execution. This conduct provoked Henry to still more inconsiderate acts, such as the appointment of an archbishop of Cologne according to his own discretion. Upon this there appeared a papal embassy summoning the king, under pain of

excommunication, to appear at Rome on the 22d February 1076, to defend himself against the charge of having violated the laws of the church. Such a proceeding was illegal against any one, and against the king and the future emperor altogether unjustifiable ; but the result proved that Gregory VII. had well calculated and knew the character of his adversary. Henry at once summoned a synod of the bishops of his empire at Worms for the 24th of January. The assembled prelates declared Gregory deposed, on the ground that he had raised himself to the papacy by bribery and violence, and Henry himself communicated the decision to Gregory in a most insulting letter. The bishops of Lombardy, who felt still more guilty of simony than those of Germany, approved of the decree of the Worms synod. About the time when Gregory received this news, ambassadors from various bishops, both German and Lombard, appeared before him, declaring their willingness to obey his decrees. Gregory, therefore, quickly assembled, on the 22d of February, another synod at Rome, which unanimously declared Henry to have forfeited his kingdom, and pronounced excommunication against him and all his followers. This was the highest ecclesiastical punishment ; it involved the loss of all civil rights, made the sufferer an outlaw, and freed all his subjects from their lawful obedience to him. Letters were sent in every direction to acquaint all Christians with the import of the decree.

Henry IV., in the meantime, acted with a recklessness which shows that in his own mind he had no misgiving whatever as to his ultimate success in the struggle against the pope. He hastened from Worms to Goslar and gave the reins to his passion and rage against the Saxons. Their chiefs, who had recently surrendered to him, were banished to the most distant parts of the kingdom, their fiefs were given to his faithful followers, and their other property was left to the rapacity of his soldiers ; he further ordered the demolished strongholds in Saxony to be rebuilt by forced labour of the people, and threw garri-

sons into them, which brought unspeakable misery upon the surrounding country. When he was informed of his excommunication and deposition by the pope, he retaliated by causing Gregory VII. to be declared an outlaw, first at Utrecht and afterwards at Pavia.

The tyrannical insolence shown towards the Saxon chiefs, who had surrendered on the understanding that their fate was to be determined by the assembled princes of the empire, particularly exasperated these latter, who now clearly saw what they had to expect from a man like Henry. Encouraged by the papal decree, they set free several of the Saxon nobles who had been intrusted to their keeping, and the liberated prisoners, on their return to Saxony, roused their countrymen to resist the tyrant. The consequence was that not only the Saxon chiefs, but others also in different parts of his kingdom, rose against him, under the pretext that they were bound to obey the laws of religion. Boleslav II. of Poland at once refused to pay the customary tribute and assumed the title of king. Under these circumstances several dukes and bishops summoned a meeting of all the German tribes to Tribur, in October 1076, for the ostensible purpose of restoring the peace of the church. The princes, who appeared in great numbers, determined in their own minds to depose Henry, and elect another king ; but after various negotiations with him, they declared their willingness to leave the final decision to the pope, whom they proposed to invite to Augsburg, where, at a meeting of the princes of the empire, a final verdict was to be pronounced ; in the meantime Henry was to refrain from all acts of government, and it was agreed that, if within twelve months he should not be freed from the curse, he was to cease to be king, and a successor to be appointed.

Henry, finding himself thus forsaken by nearly all the chiefs, promised to acquiesce in their decision ; but instead of waiting for the arrival of the pope, he himself, without the knowledge

of the German nobles, set out to meet him, in order that he might not be put to the humiliation of meeting him in the presence of his accusers. With great difficulty he crossed the Alps in the heart of winter, accompanied by his faithful wife Bertha, and in January 1077 he arrived in Italy. Bishops and crowds of people met him, in the hope that he was come to take vengeance on the pope. Gregory was on his way to Germany, but on hearing of Henry's arrival, took refuge in a castle of the countess Matilda at Canossa. The king endeavoured, through the influence of the countess and several Italian princes, to induce the pope to withdraw his sentence of excommunication, assuring them that he was truly penitent for the sins he had committed. Gregory sternly demanded that he should first atone for his sins against the church by unconditional obedience to the holy see. Upon this the king proceeded to Canossa, and without any followers, entered the court of the castle barefoot and divested of his regal garments, and there waited for the pope's orders. The day was cold and frosty, and the king remained in the open air from the morning till sunset, but no message came from the pope. The same was done on the second and third days; on the fourth he was admitted, and the excommunication was withdrawn on condition that, on a day and at a place to be fixed upon by the pope, he was to present himself before the assembled princes of Germany, and there submit to Gregory's decision as to whether he should retain his kingdom or not; he was further obliged to promise henceforth to obey the pope, and do penance for all his offences against the church.

Henry humbly and willingly accepted these terms, confirming his promises by an oath. The princes of Italy were in a state of great exasperation at the humiliating treatment to which Henry had permitted himself to be subjected, and caused the people to take up arms with the view of deposing him, proclaiming his son Conrad king, and proceeding to Rome to elect

another pope. They showed their contempt of Henry without reserve, and, surrounded as he was by enemies, he saw no other means of propitiating the Italians than by breaking through the promises he had made to the pope. He accordingly resumed his regal functions, and assembled around him those who had been excommunicated by Gregory, or were opposed to his ecclesiastical reforms.

The German princes in the meantime appointed a meeting for March 1077, at which they invited the pope to pronounce his final sentence upon Henry. The latter refused to cross the Alps, declaring that his presence in Italy was indispensable, and the pope wrote to Germany that Henry's conduct made it impossible for him to come; but at the same time he exhorted the princes to exert themselves in restoring the peace of the empire, which had been so long convulsed by the king's tyranny and licentiousness, until he himself should be able to appear among them and decide according to the laws of the church. The assembled princes of Germany, however, feeling somewhat vexed at the tone of the papal communication, declared that the election of a new king might indeed be postponed for a time, but that they themselves knew what the interests of the empire required, and that they hoped the pope would not oppose their decrees. As the king, by not keeping the promises made to the pope, had again fallen under the ban of the church, the princes thought it necessary to proceed to the election of a new king; and on the proposal of the archbishop of Mayence, Rudolph of Suabia was chosen, on condition that the bishops of his kingdom should not be appointed through favour or for presents, but by election according to the law of the church. The kingly dignity, moreover, was not, as had been the custom hitherto, to descend from father to son; but it was agreed that it should be in the power of the people to elect any one they pleased, if the king's son was unworthy or displeasing to them. When these points were settled, and Germany thus formally declared an elective mon-

archy, Rudolph was anointed by the archbishop of Mayence. But many cities and bishops of southern Germany rose against the new king, and the priests, believing him to be a supporter of the papal reforms, stirred up the people, both in the towns and in the country.

Henry's conduct in these perplexing circumstances showed that, with all his rash thoughtlessness, he still possessed some of the manly courage and determination of his race ; for now, when all seemed to be lost, he resolutely commenced the contest against all his enemies, neglecting nothing that seemed to promise success. Having secured the support of the Lombard bishops, he left Italy, and after crossing the Alps found numerous followers everywhere in southern Germany. The estates of his enemies were confiscated and lavishly distributed among his adherents. Rudolph was soon compelled to quit Suabia and take refuge among the Saxons, whom Henry threatened with a fresh invasion. Gregory VII., becoming alarmed at his adversary's success, demanded of the two rival kings to restore peace, reserving to himself the right of deciding their dispute ; for this act the pope was accused by the Saxons of faithlessness. Rudolph declared himself willing to submit to the pope's decision, and being supported by the Saxons and several other princes, obliged Henry, in September 1077, to enter into an arrangement, according to which their dispute should be settled at a general diet of the princes and ambassadors of the pope. But as Henry, according to his peculiar untrustworthiness, did not appear on the appointed day, the sentence of excommunication against him was renewed at Goslar, where Rudolph was then residing. By negotiations Henry succeeded indeed in putting off any active hostilities on the part of both the Saxons and the pope ; but in the summer of 1078 open war broke out, and after an undecided battle in Thuringia Henry marched into Suabia, where he secured a trusty friend in Count Frederick of Bïren, to whom he gave Rudolph's duchy

of Suabia, and not long after his own daughter Agnes. This prince was the founder of the castle of Hohenstaufen, and the ancestor of the illustrious race deriving its name from it. The war against the Saxons and his other opponents was continued in the meantime, and in 1080, Rudolph was mortally wounded.

Having got rid of this formidable rival, Henry found it necessary again to march into Italy to support his Lombard friends, though his main object seems to have been to extricate himself from the ban of the church, either by the overthrow of Gregory, or by a reconciliation with him. After the death of Rudolph, all the more moderate friends of Gregory advised him to make his peace with Henry ; but while the pope insisted upon the necessity of electing a king that would be obedient to the church, Henry was more than ever determined boldly and bravely to defend the rights of his crown, which he thought had been trampled upon by Gregory ; and being joined by nearly all the towns and bishops of Italy, and even by many vassals of the countess Matilda, he made himself master of Rome by treachery in 1083, after a siege of three years. The pope was besieged in the castle of St. Angelo, and Henry caused the synod assembled at Rome to elect Guido, the excommunicated bishop of Ravenna, to the papacy under the name of Clement III., who now bestowed the imperial crown upon Henry and Bertha. Gregory being threatened by the Romans, fled from his castle and took refuge at Salerno among the Normans, who were both supporters of Gregory and hostile to the German influence in Italy. The Normans had become attached to the cause of the pope at the time of Nicholas II., who in order to secure their assistance in the carrying out of his law respecting the election of popes, had given to their duke, Robert Guiscard, the provinces of Apulia and Calabria as fiefs, and also granted him permission to conquer Sicily. The Normans, now commanded by Robert Guiscard, were advancing upon Rome, and

Henry, not feeling strong enough to cope with them, withdrew ; not long after, in 1084, circumstances obliged him to return across the Alps, leaving Italy in the same unsatisfactory condition in which four years before he had left Germany.

Not long after Henry's departure for Italy, the Saxons, alarmed at Henry's success and insolence, had summoned all the chiefs of Germany to meet for the election of a new king, to whom all were to submit without exception. After many negotiations and discussions they elected, in 1081, Hermann of Salm, a son of the count of Luxemburg, who was celebrated for his wealth and valour, but was unable to make himself generally popular. The war in Germany continued and increased in intensity, for not only were the different tribes arrayed against one another, but each tribe was divided into parties: it was this disturbed condition of the country that induced Henry soon after his withdrawal from Rome to return to Germany. He now displayed great activity and energy in restoring order, and as public opinion began to be strongly expressed on both sides, negotiations were once more resorted to, during which Henry, with the assistance of his pope Clement III., got rid of many of his opponents among the bishops. About this time, in 1085, Gregory VII. died in exile at Salerno, having shortly before renewed the curse upon Henry, and obliged his friends solemnly to promise never to receive into the bosom of the church either Henry or his pope, unless both resigned their usurped power and submitted to the authority of the church. The dying words of Gregory are said to have been, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, and for this I die in exile."

The death of Gregory VII. did not much alter the position of Henry, for his policy was adopted by his successors, and neither the popes nor the emperor were able to raise themselves above the parties they respectively headed. In order to maintain the imperial crown, which had always been the highest

object of his ambition, Henry was obliged to enrich his friends at the expense of his enemies, whom he deposed and whose estates he confiscated; but such proceedings only increased the exasperation of his opponents. His rival Hermann, finding himself assailed by Ecbert, an ambitious Saxon noble, concluded a treaty with Henry, in 1088, in which he resigned the kingly dignity. Ecbert, who strove to obtain the crown for himself, was slain, in 1090, by his personal enemies. The princes, as well as the people of Saxony, after so many years of bloody strife, now began to long for peace, and the Saxon duke Magnus henceforth appears at the head of his race as a supporter of Henry. But notwithstanding this, Henry could find no repose, for the parties in the rest of Germany, especially in Bavaria and Suabia, were more infuriated than ever. The family of Hohenstaufen had succeeded in establishing themselves only in the northern part of Suabia, while the south was still in the hands of the relations of Rudolph; and Bavaria was almost entirely in the power of Duke Guelph IV., a staunch supporter of the papal authority. But as Franconia and the two Lorraines stood faithfully by the emperor, even his enemies at Rome changed their minds so far as to signify their willingness to offer the hand of reconciliation, if he would only give up his pope Clement III. The emperor himself seemed inclined to yield, but the bishops of his own party opposed every attempt at reconciliation on these terms.

14. After the death of Gregory VII., a whole year had elapsed during which there was no other pope but Clement III., the creature of Henry; at last, however, Victor III., who had been recommended by Gregory, ascended the papal throne; but his equivocal conduct was not calculated to restore the peace of the church. Urban II., who succeeded him in 1087, displayed greater vigour and activity. For the purpose of securing the assistance and co-operation of the powerful house of the Guelphs, this pope, in 1089, prevailed upon the countess Matilda, who was then

forty-three years old, to give her hand to the son of Duke Guelph iv., a youth of eighteen. Henry iv., provoked by this manœuvre, went to Italy the year after, in the hope of completely crushing the valiant countess, whom he had already deprived of her large estates in Lorraine. He soon succeeded in compelling Mantua, the most important of her Italian cities, to surrender; but the countess, tired of the incessant ravages of war, and having already found it impossible to live with her youthful husband, now consented to commence negotiations for peace. On the representation, however, of some of her more zealous friends, that peace with Henry iv. was a sin against the Holy Ghost, she abandoned the plan and once more determined, in 1092, to take up arms in the defence of the interests of the church. It was about this time that the strict clerical party advised Conrad, the son of Henry, who had already been recognised as his father's successor in Germany and was then staying in Italy, to renounce his father; and the young man, being of a weak intellect and a bigoted disposition, gave way. This sad event led to a schism even among the natural adherents of the imperial family, and made a deep impression upon the emperor himself.

But notwithstanding this untoward rebellion of his son, Henry's affairs once more took a favourable turn, for he was now joined by the family of the Guelphs, who with his assistance hoped to compel the countess Matilda to cancel a document, by which she intended to make over all her possessions to the papal see. Meanwhile the enthusiasm excited in the western world for the recovery of the Holy Land, and the war against the Saracens, began to withdraw attention from the wearisome struggles among the Christians themselves, and at the same time threatened to increase the number of the adherents of the pope in Germany as well as in Italy. Henry, therefore, gave up the war against Matilda and his son Conrad, and in 1097 after an absence of seven years, returned to Ger-

many, which he never left again. Duke Guelph of Bavaria was permanently secured by the emperor's promise to make the duchy hereditary in his family ; at the same time Frederick of Hohenstaufen received the whole of Suabia, and his opponents were indemnified by having other territories assigned to them. At a meeting of the German princes held at Cologne in the same year, Henry caused his son Conrad, who had already been crowned king of Italy, to be declared a rebel and deprived of his claim to the succession, and his younger son Henry (v.) to be elected his successor. The coronation of the latter took place immediately after at Aix-la-Chapelle. Conrad, who had in reality been used only as a tool by the clerical party in Italy, was abandoned by his friends as soon as they thought they could do without him, and he died in obscurity in 1101.

The aged emperor might now have looked forward to a peaceful evening of his chequered reign, the more so, as pope Urban II. died in 1099, and was soon followed by his rival Clement III. ; but the strict clerical party was implacable, and Henry, though yielding in small matters, could not be trusted even in these. The new pope, Pascal II., renewed the sentence of excommunication against him, and the emperor endeavoured to propitiate him by the same means he had applied to his predecessors, that is, by promising to undertake a crusade against the infidels and to restore peace in Germany. In regard to this latter point he did indeed check the lawless conduct of the nobles, freed the highroads and rivers, which were infested by them, and put an end to the persecution of the Jews, which in consequence of the crusading enthusiasm had broken out in several parts of Germany. He also showed great kindness, as indeed he had always done, towards the poor and the sick, and many persons suffering from contagious diseases were received into his own palace and there taken care of. But as he advanced in years, his interest in public affairs decreased, and a general impression gradually arose that he neglected his duties as king and emperor.

Under these circumstances his son Henry, in 1105, allowed himself to be induced by his friends to rise in open rebellion against his aged father ; his pretext was, the sentence of excommunication under which the old man was labouring, but his real motive was fear, lest he should be excluded from the succession in consequence of the excommunication. From Bavaria, where he was well received, the rebel son sent an embassy to Rome, promising obedience to the pope and receiving the papal blessing in return. He then proceeded to Saxony, where he endeavoured to make friends by an affectation of humility, and by the promise to improve the state of the church and respect the rights of the people. A synod was then summoned to Mayence, at which a papal legate also was to appear. Against this city the emperor now marched with an army. The son, on his approach, proposed negotiations, but contrived to get his father into his own hands ; he then took him to the castle of Ingelheim, and, by threats of murder, tried to induce him to resign his kingdom. When the aged monarch asked, whether, on his abdicating, the sentence of excommunication would be withdrawn, he was told by the papal legate that he must seek to effect this at Rome. The emperor, in a state of despondency, at last consented to everything : he gave up his kingdom and all his possessions, and even declared himself to be unworthy of the throne. This happened in January 1106. When his son had left him, and his friends informed him that his life was still not safe, and that he would either be put to death, or kept in confinement for life, he fled to Cologne, where he was kindly received, and thence to the bishop of Liege. By this dishonourable conduct of his son, his friends were once more roused into action, and demanded of the emperor to resume his crown ; but he declared that, although he was treated unjustly, he would rather spend the remainder of his life in retirement than involve his subjects in civil war. Being hard pressed, however, he at last consented to undertake

the command of an army and relieve his faithful city of Cologne, which was besieged by his enemies. But when he was just on the point of commencing hostilities, he suddenly died at Liege in the month of August 1106. His last prayer was, that his son might pardon those who had been faithful to himself, and bury his body at Speier with those of his ancestors. His faithful friend, the bishop of Liege, buried him in his own city ; but the bishops hostile to him ordered the body to be taken out of its grave. Henry v. then had it conveyed to Speier, where the grateful citizens deposited it in the cathedral ; but the bishop of the place ordered it to be removed to a yet unconsecrated chapel. There it remained until the year 1111, when Henry v., having obtained a revocation of the ban, caused it to be buried with unusual splendour.

The reign of Henry iv. was one of the most disastrous periods in the history of Germany : for upwards of thirty years the country had been distracted by almost uninterrupted civil wars, during which the several tribes, headed by their dukes, most of whom became hereditary rulers, acquired a degree of independence that was most dangerous to the unity of the kingdom. In his opposition to the dukes, Henry had been supported by the inhabitants of the towns and the open country, that is, the peasantry, and their condition was in return much favoured and improved by him. On the whole, Henry, notwithstanding some acts of flagrant brutality during his earlier life, was a man of a pious and tender heart ; but he was easily carried away by pride and insolence, which often led him to rash and inconsiderate acts. Gregory vii., his opponent, was more than a match for him : his ambition and the conviction that he was destined by Heaven to raise the representative of Christ above all the princes of the earth, made him a true hero, and in comparison with him Henry was weak and vacillating. The combination of the papal party with that of the princes of Germany succeeded so far in their re-

sistance to the growing despotism of the king, as to obtain a solemn declaration that Germany was an elective monarchy, though the final decision of this important question was still delayed for about two centuries. The political and religious conflicts in Germany and Italy, which had been commenced with noble and lofty views on the part of Gregory, had burst asunder the most sacred ties that bind together a nation, a tribe, and a family. The questions which were raised for solution on the highest and most important subjects, were so interwoven with worldly and material interests, that it was impossible to solve them honourably and fairly ; and this led to an almost unparalleled demoralization, which, in its turn, called forth a savageness and brutality far surpassing everything that had been witnessed during the preceding centuries. All faith in the church and in high principles gradually vanished entirely ; things assumed an aspect similar to that which had prevailed at the period of the transition from paganism to Christianity, and violence and cunning were everywhere resorted to, for the purpose of gratifying the basest selfishness. No part of the population suffered more than the inhabitants of the open country, who had not only to endure every kind of oppression and brutality from the belligerents, and from the higher and lower vassals and their armed servants, but were in great numbers reduced by their tormentors to a condition of more or less complete dependence ; for throughout the kingdom there was no one able or willing to protect them in their rights.

This state of lawless anarchy benefited no class except the lower vassals, who, in a spirit of defiance, demanded substantial rewards for the services they rendered to their lay or clerical superiors, and thus obtained not only the booty made in war, but independence and other material advantages, while common interests drew them together, so that henceforth they began more and more to form a compact body. But the general distress of the times made all classes feel the absolute necessity of

unity and order ; and hence it happened that, notwithstanding the decree about the elective character of the monarchy, the hereditary succession was maintained in the case of Henry's son, Henry v.

The Franconian kings still continued to reign according to the ancient customs, which were by no means fixed ; in important matters they frequently consulted the general council of the great nobles. The principal sources of their revenue consisted in the regal domains, which, by the liberality of the Saxon kings towards the church, had been greatly reduced. The kings had no fixed place of residence, but wandered from one place to another, though their favourite cities were Goslar and Worms.

The general excitement during the eleventh century gave a fresh impulse to mental activity ; several men of great learning devoted themselves to writing the history of their own time, and produced works that are valuable, though not free from strong party spirit. Among these we may here notice Hermann of Reichenau, the most learned man of his age, who wrote a chronicle, which is particularly important for the history of Henry III. ; Wipo, chaplain of Conrad II. and Henry III. ; Bruno the Saxon, who wrote against Henry IV. ; Lambert of Hersfeld ; Hermann of Veringen ; and Adam of Bremen. Literature, though mainly cultivated by priests and monks, and exclusively in the Latin language, nevertheless began to exercise a considerable influence on public opinion, and many new ideas were called forth, especially in the disputes about the right of investiture.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF FRANCE FROM THE ACCESSION OF HUGO CAPET
TO THE YEAR 1108.

1. Hugo Capet (987-996); 2. Robert (996-1031); 3. Henry I. (1031-1060); 4. Philip I. (1060-1108); 5. The Normans.

1. THE attempt to reform and regenerate the church and the papacy had brought the greatest misery upon Germany, not so much because the objects were in themselves incapable of being accomplished, as on account of the stern haughtiness of Gregory VII. on the one hand, and the want of earnestness and ordinary prudence on the part of Henry IV. Not only were the political advantages gained by the prudent and energetic predecessors of Henry almost entirely swept away, the material prosperity of the people destroyed, and the organization of civil society sadly broken up; but the very foundations of religion and morality were shaken, and the German church itself had both materially and spiritually sunk into a state of decay unparalleled in the previous history of the country. It was only in the quiet retirement of a few monasteries that a remnant of the better state of things was still lingering to serve as a leaven for the future.

The Romanized nations of western Europe, with the exception of the Italians, whose fate was already inextricably interwoven with that of Germany, formed a striking contrast to this deplorable state of affairs: they were most vigorously progressing in all the departments of public and private life, their strength was fully developing itself, and this process was assisted by the lively interest they took in the reforms of the church; for as they did not directly feel the evil consequences of the disputes about the rights of the church and the state, which fell with all their weight upon Germany and Italy, they

enjoyed the great and beneficial results of the movement, without being involved in its troubles. France, in particular, had received an impulse which, though not much felt at the time, exercised a most salutary influence both upon the nation and the government.

Under the last of the Carlovingsians, the kingly power consisted almost exclusively in the control exercised over the great vassals, and even this power was scarcely more than nominal. When the Carlovingsian race became extinct, the idea of the monarchy was still adhered to, in accordance with the traditional notions ; and as the Capetingsians, in their capacity of dukes of Francia, the natural centre of France, seized the crown, a union of all parts of the country under one head followed almost as a matter of course ; especially as the church, being deeply interested there as elsewhere in maintaining national and political unity, was extremely active in establishing that unity under the new dynasty. Still, however, the inhabitants of the northern parts of France continued to be essentially different from those of the south in language and civilisation. The north was mainly inhabited by the conquering Franks ; and the settlement of the Normans in that part of the kingdom had added fresh strength to the Germanic element, while in the south the Roman nationality and civilisation still maintained themselves. The contrast between the north and the south was throughout the middle ages more strongly marked in France than in Germany, and the two parts were kept together only by the central duchy of Francia, which gave its rulers to the whole country.

When Hugo, surnamed Capet (from *cappa*, *cappatus*, Hugo being a lay abbot), was crowned by the archbishop of Rheims, in 987, Charles of Lower Lorraine, the only surviving descendant of the Carlovingsians, did not venture to put forth his claims to the succession ; but among the crown vassals there still were some, who felt strongly attached to the old dynasty, and

these were now joined by those opposed to the new king upon other grounds, especially by the duke of Aquitaine. In order to prevent any claims to the crown being made either by the Carlovingian or any other ambitious family, Hugo, in 988, caused an assembly of nobles at Orleans to declare his son Robert king, and anoint him as such. This custom was henceforth observed by all the French kings down to the time of Philip Augustus. Hugo then proceeded to besiege Charles at Laon : he first secured the interest of the bishop of the place, who allowed himself to be prevailed upon treacherously to deliver up Charles. The captive duke was imprisoned at Orleans, and died soon after. His sons, indeed, put forward their claims, but without success, and were obliged to take refuge in Germany, where they died in obscurity. The Aquitanians, however, still refused to recognise Hugo as their king, and Brittany likewise maintained itself almost independent of the crown. But the countries bordering on the duchy of Francia submitted, Hugo being supported by his brother Henry, duke of Burgundy, and by Richard I. of Normandy, who was his brother-in-law. Francia, Hugo's own dominion, formed the real centre and nucleus of the kingdom, for which reason its name was subsequently extended to the whole of modern France. As he had to contend against turbulent vassals down to the end of his life, Hugo endeavoured to gain the support of the clergy of his country by restoring to them their liberty at elections, and by liberal donations—a system which his successors also thought it wise to follow. In his relations to the papacy, he was less successful. The popes were desirous to obtain in France the same power as they had acquired under the Saxon emperors in Germany ; but Hugo and a large number of the French bishops opposed the claims of the Roman See. The dispute with the papacy arose out of the circumstance that a French council had deposed Arnulf, archbishop of Rheims, for having taken up the cause of the Carlovingians. His successor in the arch-

bishopric resigned his dignity at the request of the pope, but Hugo persisted in keeping Arnulf in captivity.

At the time of his accession, Hugo was in reality no more than the first among a number of equals, and had not even the prestige of legitimacy, which gave to the descendants of Charlemagne a great advantage over him ; but he was energetic, prudent, and above all, rich enough to secure the support of many friends, so that he was enabled to leave the kingdom to his descendants more like a real inheritance than as a precarious possession, dependent on the goodwill of the vassals. No essential change was effected by him in his relation to these great nobles ; but something at all events was gained in the circumstance that the latter, notwithstanding their instinctive tendency to independence, recognised both the unity of the kingdom—though it was little more than nominal—and the right of succession in the family of Hugo.

2. Robert succeeded his father without opposition. He had been educated at Rheims in all works of piety and learning, under the superintendence of Gerbert ; but his training as a soldier and ruler had been neglected, whence he endeavoured even more than his father to strengthen his power by leaning on the church. He took great pleasure in leading the choir during divine service, and took a fatherly care of the poor and distressed, more than a thousand of whom are said to have been fed by him every day ; he pardoned his enemies, even those who had conspired against his life, and endured every insolence without opposition, in order to practise the deepest humility. When some person had stolen the golden fringes of his robe, he refused to prosecute the offender, saying that the thief stood more in need of the gold than he. Such conduct in a king was the more startling, as it was rare in men of high station ; and his contemporaries praised him for it beyond all measure. Although the spirit of defiance and disobedience among the nobles was not curbed by the king's piety and humility, yet

the example was not without good effects ; and it may to some extent have been the result of his conduct that a council, held at Limoges, obliged the duke and nobles of Aquitaine to conclude what was called a *pactum pacis et justitiæ*, the first instance of a *treuga Dei*; or God's truce.

Towards the pope, Robert was more yielding than his father had been, and immediately after his accession restored Arnulf to his see at Rheims, in consequence of which Gerbert left France and went to the court of Otho III. of Germany. Robert was married to Bertha, a near relation of his by blood. The popes had in the course of time increased the number of impediments to matrimonial alliances, evidently with the view of acquiring greater control over the affairs of the secular rulers, and in consequence of this, the pope commanded Robert to divorce his wife. On his refusal, he was excommunicated. For a time he bore the blow meekly, and declined to put away his beloved wife ; at length, however, he yielded, and married Constance, a daughter of the count of Toulouse, who, profiting by the king's weakness, gratified her own avarice and love of dominion.

Robert, who loved peace above all things, and had no worldly ambition of any kind, declined the crown of Italy, which was offered to him by the Italian party opposed to Conrad II. of Germany. He recoiled before the danger of accepting it, and no one can blame him for this, it being of more importance to the Capetian dynasty to take firm root in France than to acquire foreign possessions, which might have placed the very existence of the dynasty in jeopardy. The counts and dukes of France felt perfectly independent of the king, whom they regarded only as one of themselves, a feeling clearly manifested in the answer given by the count of Champagne to Robert, when attempting to interfere in the internal affairs of the county. " I am," said he, " by the grace of God the hereditary ruler of my dominion ; my fief has come down to me from my ances-

tors by inheritance, and is no part of your domain. Do not force me, in the defence of my honour, to do things which might displease you ; for God is my witness that I would rather die than live without honour." So spoke a count to the king of France, and such was the feeling of all the great vassals of the crown, whose fiefs in almost every instance had become hereditary. They governed their own dominions quite independently of the king, and, generally speaking, maintained peace and order in their respective spheres more efficiently than the feeble king did in his. In Aquitaine, Duke William v., who extended what he called his kingdom as far as the Rhone, secured internal peace partly by means of the authority with which his own piety invested the church, and partly by his personal energy ; and in Normandy, Duke Richard II., who had received the oath of allegiance from his Norman nobles even during the lifetime of his father Richard I., successfully opposed his restless and ambitious vassals. King Robert maintained a good understanding with these two dukes, and it was mainly owing to the active assistance he received from the Normans, that he secured for his second son Henry the duchy of Burgundy, which in 1002 had become vacant by the death of his uncle Henry. A war, however, had to be carried on for a period of twelve years against his uncle's step-son, who claimed the succession. With these exceptions most of the vassals, and even the bishops, generally acted with a complete defiance of the law, and followed the maxim that might is right.

In order to secure the succession to his own family, Robert, in 1017, caused his eldest son Hugo, who was then only ten years old, to be crowned as king of France ; but as he died before his father, the second son, Henry, who had already been made duke of Burgundy, was crowned in 1027. Constance manœuvred to secure the crown to Robert, the youngest of the sons, but her intrigues were of no avail, and Henry, in 1031, succeeded as his father had wished.

3. Henry I. on his accession found himself opposed by his younger brother Robert, and was obliged to take refuge at the court of Robert II. (Le Diable) of Normandy. The duke protected the king, and peace was restored by Henry's ceding to his brother the duchy of Burgundy, which henceforth remained hereditary in his family until its extinction in 1361.

Bad harvests and famine, in consequence of excessive rains, which had marked the last years of his father's reign, now reached such a fearful height, that, in 1031, when the cessation of rain began to promise better times, the truce of God (*treuga Dei*) was introduced, which compelled the powerful vassals during certain days in the week and at certain seasons in the year to suspend the hostilities in which they were almost incessantly engaged with one another. This salutary measure, originating with the clergy of Aquitaine, was afterwards proclaimed by councils in all parts of France. For when, after the first plentiful harvest, acts of violence again began to prevail to an alarming extent, the clergy, finding it impossible to put a stop to the endless feuds among the great nobles, appealed to several councils, and in the end succeeded in establishing the truce of God in every province of the kingdom. Its violation was visited on the offenders with ecclesiastical punishments; and we may form some idea of the weakness of the kingly power from the fact that Henry had the greatest difficulty in putting down a great feud, which had broken out in Francia itself; and it must be owned that, generally speaking, the unity of France was preserved not so much through the personal influence of Henry, as through a general and instinctive feeling of its necessity. The truce of God, notwithstanding the great efforts of the church and the king, did not indeed answer all the expectations which were entertained; but it was nevertheless a very great step in advance, that the keeping of the peace gradually came to be recognised as a point of honour with the individual nobles, as well as with their

whole order. The wild pursuit of war, which until then had been the native element of the feudal nobility, now received a powerful check ; and the improved religious feeling, which penetrated all classes of the people, produced a complete change in the character of the nobles, who in those times were the true representatives of the lay portion of the nation.

Henry I. did not venture to prevent the annexation of the kingdom of Burgundy, which naturally belonged to France, to Germany by Conrad II.; and at a later period his claims to Lorraine were vigorously repelled by Henry IV. of Germany. It was equally in vain that he tried to deprive William (the Conqueror), a natural son of Robert II., of his duchy of Normandy ; like his predecessors, Henry was obliged, by a peace with Normandy, to secure his own position, and it was by this means alone that he was enabled, a short time before his death, to secure the succession to his eldest son Philip, then only seven years old. By the king's summons, the great secular and ecclesiastical nobles assembled in 1059 at Rheims, where, as if by accident, two papal legates also made their appearance. Philip before the assembled nobles promised duly to defend the interests of the church, and to allow to the people intrusted to his care the rights lawfully belonging to them. The archbishop of Rheims then proclaimed Philip king, and the nobles assented. Henry I. died the year after this solemnity.

4. Philip I. stood at first under the guardianship of his mother, and afterwards under that of count Baldwin of Flanders, at whose death the young king was only fifteen years old. His courtiers and councillors exercised a most baneful influence upon him by leading him to indulge in an indolent and licentious mode of life. French historians say of him not unjustly, that he is famous only for the things he saw done during his reign, for he himself took no part in what was going on around him. In 1066, while the king was yet a minor, William, the bastard of Normandy, conquered England, whence subsequently various

complications with England arose, the kings of England being at the same time vassals of the French crown ; and the dispute between Gregory VII. and Henry IV. shook all Christendom to its foundations, without the French king taking any part in it. The wars he had to carry on were all of a petty nature, and directed against his own vassals, from one of whom he carried off his wife Bertrada. On being excommunicated for this offence by Pope Urban II., at the council of Clermont, in the presence of thousands of people, who were preparing to join the first crusade, he abandoned Bertrada ; but afterwards took her again, and again abandoned her ; his passion for her, however, gaining the upper hand, he took her up a third time, and the church at last connived at his conduct.

Even before his accession, William VIII., duke of Aquitaine, had taken forcible possession of Gascoigne, the ducal family of that country having become extinct ; and in this manner the whole of the south-western portion of France, as far as the Pyrenees, became an almost independent state. Ever since the year 1061, the counts of Toulouse had been extending their dominion over nearly the whole of south-eastern France, without Philip's even attempting to stop their progress. During the disputes about the right of investiture, Pope Gregory VII. also made an attack upon Philip I., whose licentiousness and extravagance led him to rob churches and convents, and to sell ecclesiastical benefices to the highest bidder. The pope, indeed, threatened him with excommunication and deposition, but as he himself became more deeply involved with Henry IV. of Germany, he showed himself more lenient and pliable towards France, and permitted a continuance of the ancient custom, according to which the clergy, at their installation, took the oath of allegiance to their secular sovereign.

Under Philip I., the kingly power was neither respected nor feared, and the influence of the Capetingian race was at its lowest ebb ; but after his time it gradually and steadily re-

covered, and succeeded in founding the French nationality, and uniting under the name of France all the countries which still bear it.

In the year 1100, Philip shared the regal dignity with his eldest son Louis (VI.), and left to him the whole administration of his dominions. Louis was the first among the Capetings who displayed really chivalrous qualities ; even as a young man he had compelled rebellious vassals to return to obedience, and protected the poor and oppressed, so that at his father's death he was universally esteemed and respected.

5. The great change which was taking place among the people of France during the reign of the first Capetings, was nowhere more striking than in Normandy, the largest among the duchies of the country, and at that time almost independent. The Scandinavian pirates and adventurers had adopted the feudal forms which they had found already in existence, but which among this new people not only took fresh root as in a new soil, but attained a fuller and nobler development than anywhere else. The Normans had once been the systematic enemies of Christianity and the destroyers of its churches, but in their new country they soon became the most zealous believers, and their devotion and attachment to the church were more intense than among any other people. Rich donations, honours, and privileges shed a particular lustre on the church of Normandy ; and the ideal or chivalrous element, which in the course of time was diffused among all the nobles of western Christendom, originated mainly among the Normans, who first cherished and developed it. But this extraordinary change, great as it was, did not alter the fundamental basis of their national character ; the intense pleasure they felt in displaying their prowess in battle and combat still remained, but it was no longer directed to the gratification of rude selfishness and insolence, so that even at that early time traces may be seen of an ambition for higher and nobler enterprises. The

Norman nobles, moreover, who in the course of a few generations had adopted the language and customs of the French among whom they lived, still felt something of that irresistible desire to embark in enterprises to distant lands, which had brought their ancestors from the far north to the coasts of France. The narrow boundaries of the duchy of Normandy, or rather the space between one castle and another, within which the feuds among the nobles were generally fought out, were soon felt to be too limited an arena for the display of their valour, and the sea still had the same attractions for them as for their ancestors of yore. Hence Norman warriors soon began to visit all parts of the Christian world, sometimes as pious pilgrims, and sometimes as adventurous soldiers ; but though they did not overlook the worldly advantages obtainable by such a mode of life, yet their main object was to fight for their faith against the infidels, and to see with their own eyes the localities hallowed by sacred traditions.

Ever since the beginning of the eleventh century southern Italy in particular attracted crowds of Normans. On Mount Gargano, on the east coast of Apulia, there was a monastery to which pilgrimages were made from all parts of the world, and which was connected in various ways with the monasteries of Normandy. All southern Italy was suffering at that time from the perpetual petty warfare between the Christians and the Saracens. Benevento, Salerno, and Capua were governed by native princes, descendants of the dukes of Benevento, who now maintained their independence against the German emperors and the Byzantines, with the same success as the dukes of Benevento had done against the Carlovingsians and the emperors of the East. Their most dangerous enemies, however, were the Saracens, who ever since the ninth century had been masters of Sicily, and were now making progress in the south of Italy, sometimes as enemies, and sometimes as the allies of the Byzantines. At the beginning of the eleventh century, it

almost seemed as if the small states of southern Italy would not be able to continue their obstinate resistance to the Mahomedan invaders.

In 1016, a band of Norman pilgrims arriving at Salerno were solicited by the distressed Italians to lend their assistance against the Saracens. The request was readily granted, and the Saracens, unable to resist the robust warriors of the north, were defeated. These Normans, delighted with their success, and handsomely rewarded for their services, remained in southern Italy, allying themselves with the native chiefs and cities against the Greeks as well as against the infidels, and their arms were always victorious. In 1020, even the Emperor Henry II. availed himself of their services, and rewarded them with a considerable territory in Apulia; and when afterwards they restored Duke Sergius, who had been expelled from Naples, they received a large district between Capua and Naples, in which they founded the town of Aversa, and which was recognised in 1038 as a distinct feudal county held of the Emperor Conrad II. The Normans had thus in a very short time succeeded in making themselves indispensable to whoever had to carry on war in southern Italy. Their astonishing success, and the reports they sent home of the immense wealth of the country and of the unwarlike character of its inhabitants, soon brought numbers of other Norman emigrants into Italy. Among these were the twelve gallant sons of Tancred of Hautville (Altavilla), around whom the Norman warriors grouped themselves, and under whose guidance they united, and were even more successful than before. As early as the year 1043, nearly the whole of Apulia was conquered by them in their struggles with the native chiefs and the Greeks, and the country was divided as fiefs among those who had taken part in the conquest. The Normans were then headed by William of Hautville, who was succeeded by his brothers one after another.

One fortunate circumstance brought about an extremely fa-

vourable connexion with the papal see. In the course of their conquests, the Normans took possession of Benevento, of which the sovereignty was claimed by the popes. Leo ix. left no means untried to induce them to give up their conquest; and at last when everything was found to be of no avail, he resolved to wage war against them. Leo himself, who led the army, was completely defeated, and fell into the hands of his enemies (1050). The Normans treated their illustrious prisoner with great respect and deference, which so charmed the pope, that he formally granted them as a papal fief the territories they had already conquered, and those which they might still conquer, from the Greeks and Saracens. Their power thus became so great as to alarm even the emperor of Byzantium. Leo ix. did not derive from this connexion all the advantages which he might have secured for the papal see; but Nicholas ii. laid great stress upon the fact, that the most gallant people of Italy, nay, of all Christendom, were his vassals; and after the third of the brothers had died, he gave to the fourth, Robert Guiscard (the Cunning) the title of duke of Apulia and Calabria. Robert after this conquered the important cities of Salerno and Amalfi, the latter of which was then the most powerful maritime city of the peninsula, and possessed the dominion over a great part of the Mediterranean. By this conquest the Normans, whose undertakings had hitherto been confined to Italy itself, were enabled also to embark in maritime enterprises. Thus Roger, Robert's younger brother, conquered almost the whole of Sicily, which for nearly two hundred years had been governed by the Arabs; while Robert himself attacked the Byzantine empire from Epirus, where he had gained a footing, with a small fleet. His victorious career in that quarter, however, was interrupted by Gregory vii. soliciting his aid against Henry iv. of Germany. Robert gave the desired assistance, and even recovered Rome for the pope, but was unable to keep it. In return for this service, the pope, in 1080,

conferred upon him as papal fiefs all the territories he had conquered. Not long after this, Robert undertook a second expedition into Greece, which, however, ended unfortunately, in consequence of his early death in 1085. He was succeeded by his son Roger, who was unquestionably the most powerful prince in all Italy, and reigned from 1085 till 1111. But it was not till the year 1130 that a papal bull conferred upon Robert Guiscard's successors the title of king of Sicily, which nine years later was united with the duchy of Apulia.

The new Norman state in Italy and Sicily was a faithful copy of the parent state in France, not only in the form of the constitution and its feudal arrangements, but in manners and language; and the Norman-French nationality had thus unexpectedly established itself in southern Italy among native Italians, Lombards, Greeks, and Saracens; and amid these different elements, it maintained itself with great tenacity and in great purity, for amalgamation with them was, from its very nature, impossible.

Notwithstanding all the disturbances from without and from within, which after all generally affected only the ruling dynasties, Italy preserved more than any other country the elements of Roman culture, which had their strongest support in the church, and were kept alive by the study of the Roman classics and of the civil law; so that a solid foundation was laid for modern civilisation, and its connexion with that of the ancient world was preserved. But along with the Roman law the Germanic element also maintained itself in the Lombard towns, which acquired a new and great political importance as early as the reign of Otho I.

At the time when the Normans were extending their dominion in southern Italy, another country, Saxon England, which in many respects was more foreign to its new rulers than Italy, was drawn within the sphere of Norman-French civilisation.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLAND FROM THE REIGN OF EGBERT TILL ITS CONQUEST BY THE NORMANS.

1. Egbert (800-836); 2. Ethelwolf (836-858); Ethelbald (858-860); Ethelbert (860-866); Ethelred (866-871); 3. Alfred the Great (871-901); 4. Edward the Elder (901-924); 5. Athelstane (924-940); 6. Edmund (940-946); 7. Edred (946-955); 8. Edwy (955-959); 9. Edgar (959-975); 10. Edward the Martyr (975-978); 11. Ethelred II. (978-1016); 12. Edmund Ironside; 13. Canute the Great (1016-1035); 14. Harold (1035-1039); 15. Hardicanute (1039-1042); 16. Edward the Confessor (1042-1066); 17. Harold II. (1066); 18. General remarks; 19. Scotland and Ireland.

1. EGBERT, king of Wessex, had spent thirteen years in the dominions of Charlemagne, perhaps at the very court of that great monarch; and the example he had there seen of many nations united under one sceptre no doubt directed his attention to what might be accomplished in his own country, if he should ever succeed to the throne. Wessex had gradually become the most powerful among the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, partly through its advantageous position, partly through the wise legislation of Ina, and partly through the perpetual conflicts with its British neighbours in the west. When Egbert ascended the throne of Wessex, in the year 800, his first measure is said to have been the enactment, made at a diet at Winchester with the consent of all the people, that the island of Britain should henceforth be called Anglia, that is, Angleland, or England, for the predominance of the Angles in the northern kingdoms had long since made their name the most important; and even before this time Angles had occasionally been used as a common name for both Saxons and Angles. Egbert probably did not assume the title of king of Anglia until he had subdued Mercia, for his adopting the name at that time would naturally be pleasing to his new subjects. It is also possible that he may

have avoided calling himself king of the Saxons, because Charlemagne had just then deprived the Saxons of the mother country of their independence ; it is probable also that he gave up the title of Bretwalda, because he was anxious to avoid offending Charlemagne, who ruled over the Britons in Brittany.

The Britons in the western parts of England once more rose against Egbert in 809, the very time when their kinsmen in Brittany rebelled against Charlemagne ; but the result was that Cornwall was united with Wessex, and Wales subdued, at least for a time. Well trained and prepared by the many and successful contests against the Britons, Egbert was enabled to take advantage of the time when Mercia, the principal state of the Angles, was sinking into anarchy under the upstart Beornwolf. The king of East Anglia solicited his assistance against the Mercian, and Egbert, availing himself of this opportunity, first subdued the states on the south of Mercia, which had once been subject to Wessex, but had for some time been under the dominion of Mercia. Beornwolf himself fell in a battle in 825, and Egbert thus not only became master of Mercia, but a few years later even Northumbria acknowledged his supremacy. Vassal kings or viceroys, however, still continued to exist in some of the Anglo-Saxon states, such as Mercia, Kent, and others ; but all recognised Egbert as their sovereign. During his last expedition into Wales, Egbert ravaged the country and advanced as far as Mona, which then received the name of Anglesey, that is, island of the Angles.

The union of the small Anglo-Saxon kingdoms under one energetic native chief had become a matter of necessity, as the island was more and more threatened by the Norman pirates, or Danes as they are more commonly called, from the men of that race being the most numerous among the northern adventurers. It may be observed here, however, that the Anglo-Saxons generally applied the name Danes to all strangers coming from the north, whether they were real Danes or belonged to

some other branch of the Teutonic race. During the last half century these Danes had often made descents upon the coasts of England, and Egbert had scarcely been king of all England for six years, when they commenced a series of ravaging attacks on various points of the island. They were probably instigated to some extent by the Britons of Cornwall, who united with them against Egbert. But the disloyal Britons were thoroughly defeated in a great battle (835), and Egbert ordered all the Welsh living in his dominions to quit them within the space of six months. He died the year after.

Egbert is the founder of a kingdom more extensive and more powerful than any that had yet existed in these islands ; the unity thus produced and the internal peace resulting from it were most conducive to the intellectual, social, and political development of the people ; and had it not been for the disturbances caused by the inroads of the Danes, the country might now have entered upon a period of unexampled progress and prosperity.

2. Ethelwolf, a son of Egbert, had to fight against the Danes or Normans almost without interruption throughout his reign. Their chief place of rendezvous had from the first been the Isle of Thanet, at the mouth of the Thames, from which they often carried their devastations far into the interior. In the reign of Ethelwolf they surrounded England on all sides, and, in 851, even ventured to remain in the country during the winter, but suffered a severe defeat near Ockley in Surrey, which seems to have put a stop to their inroads for some time.

Ethelwolf had received a monastic education, and this had created in him a great love of peace and tranquillity, strongly contrasting with the energetic activity of his father. But he had excellent friends and advisers, and maintained the independence of his kingdom, although during the first sixteen years of his reign he had almost incessantly to fight against the Danes. His great piety made him desirous, at the very beginning of his

reign, to undertake a pilgrimage to Rome, but the necessity of defending his kingdom prevented it. He had one daughter, who was married to the vassal king of Mercia, and five sons, the youngest of whom was Alfred (the Great) ; this last even at a tender age commenced that extraordinary career which has made his reign by far the most interesting period in Anglo-Saxon history. His father was anxious to form connexions with the continental powers, and especially with the see of Rome. The honour and dignity, which the pope had conferred on Charlemagne and his son, must have had a special charm for a mind like Ethelwolf's ; and it seems to have been with a view to obtain the papal consecration for his house in its extended dominions, that, in 853, he sent Alfred, then only five years old, with a numerous retinue to Rome, where Pope Leo IV. anointed and crowned him. Two years later, Ethelwolf himself carried out his old scheme : accompanied by his son Alfred he went to Rome, and stayed there a whole year under the pontificate of Benedict III. All the clergy from the highest to the lowest received the most liberal gifts from the king ; the school of the Saxons, which had been destroyed by fire, was rebuilt by him, and he promised to send an annual donation to Rome, which at a later period the popes claimed as a tribute under the name of St. Peter's pence. On his return through France, Ethelwolf stayed for some time with Charles the Bald, and married his daughter Judith, who was then only twelve years old. This step was not popular in England, and especially exasperated his sons, the eldest of whom, Ethelbald, conspired with others not to admit the king to his own dominions. But as Ethelwolf still enjoyed the support of the greater part of the nobles and the people, the design was thwarted ; and the king not only pardoned the rebellious son, but assigned to him the western part of his kingdom, retaining for himself only the eastern half. A few years later, in 858, Ethelwolf died, leaving Kent and his eastern dominions to his son Ethelbert.

Ethelbald's short reign (he died in 860) is notorious for his marriage with the young widow of his father, an act which so much scandalized the people and clergy, that he was obliged to divorce her and send her back to France. Judith had no children either by him or by his father, but in her third marriage with Count Baldwin of Flanders, she became the mother of Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror. Ethelbald's early death deprived England of a man who might have been of great service to the nation during the struggles that were coming.

Ethelbert, his brother, contrived to succeed him, though it was contrary to the express wish of their father, according to which Ethelred ought to have been the successor of Ethelbald. He governed the kingdom with a firm hand until his death in 866, when the western and eastern kingdoms were again united under Ethelred.

Ethelred's reign, which lasted only five years (866-871), was an uninterrupted series of unfortunate wars with the Danes, who in 860 had renewed their inroads and gained a permanent footing in England. They took possession of York, Nottingham, Peterborough, and other places, plundered and ravaged the country in a fearful manner, and acted with unexampled fury and cruelty against all churches and monasteries. East Anglia fell entirely into their hands, and one of their chiefs became its king, while other hosts established themselves in other parts of the country. Ethelred had to fight many a bloody battle against them in Wessex, in which he was bravely assisted by his brother Alfred. One terrible battle was fought near Reading, in which the king was mortally wounded.

3. After Ethelred's death, the wishes of the whole people called his youngest brother Alfred, then twenty-two years old, to the throne. He had had the title of king ever since his anointment and coronation at Rome, and during the reign of his elder brothers he had always been, in point of rank, the second person in the kingdom. His intellectual superiority, and

the valour he had displayed in the last battle against the Danes, had won for him the affections of all his subjects. The career he now entered upon, and the great qualities he unfolded during his reign, have secured him a fame and reputation unsurpassed by those of any other ruler ; for he had the rare good fortune to deliver his country from the hated yoke of foreigners, who were at the same time enemies of the Christian religion and civilisation, and to restore the laws and institutions of his ancestors.

Alfred had received a most careful education and was the darling of his mother ; before his twentieth year he was seized by an illness which threatened to render him unfit for any serious duties ; but he recovered, and in his twentieth year married the daughter of a Lincolnshire noble. During the nuptial festivities the disease again attacked him, and ever after scarcely a day passed without the complaint returning. But his strength of will and his powerful mind overcame all physical impediments. At the time when he ascended the throne, his kingdom was in the most deplorable condition : on the very day on which his brother's corpse was carried to the tomb, the Danes, strengthened by fresh hosts who had come across the sea, advanced as far as Wilton. Although they were at first routed by the dauntless courage of Alfred and his few followers, they rallied and gained the day. Eight great battles were fought during the first year of his reign, and heavy losses were sustained on both sides. At last, tired of the war, the Danes agreed to terms, on which they were to evacuate the country, with the exception of Mercia. But in spite of their promises, they continued to indulge in murdering, ravaging, and pillaging the country in all directions ; all Northumbria soon fell into their hands, and expeditions were undertaken even into the country of the Picts and the valley of the Clyde, where many Danes formed peaceful settlements, exchanging the plough for the sword. In the south the castles of Warham and Exeter were the strongholds of the enemy, from which they threatened the independence of Wessex itself.

There Alfred besieged them, and in order to prevent the landing of fresh invaders, he caused large ships to be built along the coasts ; and the new navy did excellent service, for a numerous Danish fleet, unable to effect a landing, perished at sea. Soon after, however, the enemy made an attack upon Wessex, which they ravaged and plundered ; Alfred himself was reduced to the greatest straits, and if he had been as desponding as many of his subjects, who quitted their country or submitted to the conquerors, England would have become a prey to the pagan Danes. But, accompanied by a few nobles and warriors, abandoned by and separated from his people, he spent several months during the winter in the forests and marshes of Somersetshire, where he was obliged to obtain the means of subsistence by cunning or force from the Danes themselves, or from the Saxons subdued by them. He found a place of safety in the house of a cowherd. One day, when he was sitting by the fire making arrows for his bow, the wife of the herdsman, not knowing to whom she was giving shelter, happened to be engaged in making bread. As the king allowed the bread to burn, though he was sitting close by the fire, the woman gave him a severe rebuke for his inattention and carelessness. Another tradition relates that, when Alfred was one day sitting in a hut reading the Scriptures or the history of his country, while his followers had gone to fish, a beggar who knocked at the door received from the king one-half of his last loaf of bread, whereupon St. Cuthbert appeared to him and promised that he should be restored to his kingdom. At length he constructed, with the aid of his faithful Somerset nobles, a fort, from which expeditions were undertaken against the Danes and communication was kept up with his friends. Once, it is said, he entered the camp of the enemy in the disguise of a minstrel, and by this means obtained accurate information about their number and strength. In the end he contrived to arrange a meeting with his faithful adherents of Somerset, Wiltshire, and Hamp-

shire in a forest. Having agreed upon a plan of action and vowed fidelity to one another, they broke up the next day to attack the Danes, who after a resolute resistance were driven back into their strongholds. Alfred pursued and besieged them. After a fortnight, the besieged promised to evacuate the country, if a free departure were granted to them ; they even agreed to give hostages. Not only were the terms thus offered accepted and immediately complied with, but Gothrun, the chief of the Danes, and thirty of his noblest followers, embraced Christianity and were baptized. Gothrun, after receiving the name Athelstane, was adopted by Alfred, who loaded the new converts with costly presents. All this happened in the year 880.

Henceforth Athelstane withdrew to East Anglia, which he governed as a vassal king, recognising Alfred as his sovereign, and where lands were assigned to his followers. A treaty concluded between the two kings regulated the frontiers, and the relations which were henceforth to subsist between the two nations. Christianity was the recognised religion in both states, and the existing bishoprics in the country occupied by the Danes remained as before. In this treaty Alfred ceded a large portion of Mercia to his new ally, but reserved for himself the western part, which was governed by Ethelred, his son-in-law. Thus the strangers who, owing to the weakness of the Saxon rulers during the last century, could not be expelled from the island, were united with the Saxons by one religion and by one law. England now enjoyed peace ; only a few districts were molested by the Normans or Danes, and Alfred's watchfulness in protecting the coast prevented many an attempt of new adventurers. The Danes in East Anglia, however, found it difficult at once to renounce the life to which they had been accustomed, and assisted some of their countrymen in establishing themselves on the north of the Thames. In consequence of this faithless conduct of the East Anglians, Alfred, in 884, became involved in a war with

them, and it was not without difficulty that he restored the feudal relation between himself and Athelstane, who would perhaps have been expelled from the country, had he not been supported by the Norman Rollo, who afterwards established himself in France.

For a series of years England now remained undisturbed by the Danes. Athelstane died in 890, and his successor renewed the treaty concluded with Alfred. Bernicia and the rest of Northumbria also continued to be governed by Danes, under whom the bishopric of Durham was endowed with extensive privileges ; but in 894, on the death of Guthred of Northumbria, Alfred succeeded in recovering the sovereignty of that country. About this time we hear of invasions of the Scots, who destroyed the church of Lindisfarn and ravaged the country.

Great as Alfred's activity had been in the defence of his country, the highest glory of his reign does not begin till after the final victory over the Danes ; for he now displayed the greatest intelligence and thoughtfulness in restoring what had been destroyed, and improving what had been saved. The ruined castles were rebuilt and made stronger, decayed towns and high-roads were repaired and new ones built ; the rights of the clergy were protected and their affairs regulated, and new monasteries were founded. The city of London, which during the struggles with the Danes, and through frequent fires, had been reduced to a heap of ruins, was rebuilt. In erecting new castles and churches, Alfred adopted a better and more beautiful style of architecture than had until then been known among his countrymen. But far more important than all this was the creation of a powerful navy to protect his dominions : his ships are described as better in every respect than those used before his time ; he had them built by Frisians, the most expert seamen throughout the middle ages.

What Alfred did for the administration of his dominions, and in founding their political institutions, is involved in con-

siderable obscurity, for the gratitude of posterity has ascribed to him things which had either existed long before him, or came into existence long after him. He has always been looked upon by his grateful people in the same light in which the Roman plebs regarded Servius Tullius, as the founder of all that was great and good in their institutions. Certain it is, however, that Alfred did all he could to restore law and order, and protect them against all arbitrary encroachments. With this view he made a collection of the laws of Kent, Mercia, and Wessex, introducing some few alterations with the assistance of the Witenagemot. The power and lawlessness of the nobles, which had greatly increased during the wars, required to be repressed ; special care was bestowed upon the administration of the law, and for this purpose, as well as for the prevention of violence and robbery, Alfred made a better division of the country into districts, hundreds, and thrithings. His success in these endeavours was so great that his kingdom, which during the wars had been thrown into the most fearful disorder, is said to have become in a few years the safest and best organized in all Europe. Christianity had already commenced exercising an important influence upon the civilisation of England, and the Roman clergy had many noble rivals among the Anglo-Saxons ; all the higher mental culture, however, still remained an exclusive privilege of the ecclesiastical order. But the late wars, with their devastations of monasteries and libraries, had so far extinguished all learning, that at the commencement of Alfred's reign no one could be found south of the Thames able to translate a Latin book. To remedy this state of things, the king, after the restoration of peace, gathered around him the most distinguished men from foreign countries, as well as from Mercia and other parts, where learning had not become quite extinct. Among the foreigners who were thus honoured and promoted by him, we may notice Brumbald, provost of St. Omer, John of Corvey in Westphalia, and Asser of Wales,

afterwards bishop Sherburn, to whom we are indebted for an excellent and interesting life of the king. Scotus Erigena, the most celebrated dialectician of the age, was among the friends of Alfred. In his thirty-sixth year, the king began the study of Latin, and ever after one of his favourite occupations was to translate works from that language into Anglo-Saxon, to make them accessible to his own people. The most important among these works are: 1st, Boethius on the Consolations of Philosophy, with additional thoughts and ideas by Alfred himself; 2d, the historical work of the venerable Bede; 3d, the history of Orosius. He kept up an extensive connexion with various Christian churches, by sending embassies and magnificent presents, and none of his predecessors had maintained so regular a correspondence with Rome as Alfred did; it was owing to his influence that the school of the Saxons at Rome was exempted from all duties and taxes. The education of his subjects was to him a matter of as deep concern as that of his own children. The sons of the nobility were instructed in writing, Anglo-Saxon, and Latin, before they were allowed to engage in the pursuits of war or the chase, and the school was supported by a portion of the king's own revenues. The University of Oxford, the foundation of which is ascribed to an earlier date, is likewise said to have engaged his care and attention.

These and other useful and salutary things Alfred was enabled to accomplish in a comparatively short period by prudently husbanding his time and his means. For the purpose of dividing time he used six lamps, each of which had a cover of transparent skin to protect the flame from the draught of the air, and burned for four hours. All his revenues were divided into two parts, one of which he devoted to the necessities of the state and the army, to public buildings and to hospitality; while the other was expended on churches, monasteries, schools, and the poor of all nations.

In the midst of these quiet and beneficent works the great and good king was once more disturbed by the Danes. In 893, a fearful famine was raging in the north of France, and the Danes with a fleet of two hundred and fifty ships landed on the eastern coast of Kent; soon after this another swarm appeared with eighty ships in the Thames, and established themselves in the country without any opposition from the natives. Alfred, seeing the danger which threatened his kingdom, renewed the alliances with the vassal kings of East Anglia and Northumbria, Guthrun and Guthred having died; but it soon became evident that the oaths and promises of his vassals could not be relied upon, for it was found that their subjects were making common cause with the invaders. Alfred accordingly took up a favourable position in east Kent, between the first invaders and those who had come up the Thames. The enemies, who had hitherto met with little opposition, had carelessly spread over the country; being attacked by Alfred's detachments, they hastened towards Essex, but were overtaken and defeated by Alfred's valiant son Edward, and finally driven out of that part of the country. In the meantime the faithless East Anglians and Northumbrians attacked Alfred in Wessex, but were likewise repulsed. Hereupon the Danes assembled from all parts in Essex, where they were joined by many of the East Anglians and Northumbrians. Being thus strengthened they advanced up the Thames as far as the Severn. There, however, they were met by all the faithful adherents of the king, who was himself engaged in his fleet. Both parties were successful against the Danes, who after several serious losses secretly took to flight. The war, however, and its devastations continued until 896, when the united Danes fortified a camp some miles east of London, from which they scoured the country as far as Stamford. Alfred's prudent management then compelled those already settled in the country to return to their habitations, and the others sailed away to the mouth of the Seine. Some bands still continued to infest the

south coast of England, but the king's excellent ships, manned by his West Saxon and Frisian sailors, drove them off with great loss. Hitherto the Britons of Wales had often made common cause with the Danes, but Alfred now succeeded in restoring a peaceful relation between them and the West Saxons.

The last years of Alfred's reign appear to have passed away in peace, for no further events are recorded, though there can be no doubt that he continued his beneficent activity until his death, which overtook him on the 28th of October 901, after a reign of twenty-nine years and six months, at the age of fifty-three. No ruler has ever left behind him a better-deserved reputation than Alfred : he was to England what Charlemagne had been to the Franks ; and in many respects he stands far higher, for his fame is not tarnished by ignoble ambition, cruelty, or love of conquest. His bodily infirmity, and the days of misfortune through which he had to pass, contributed to bring forth in him the character of both a sage and a hero.

4. After Alfred's death, the votes of the Witenagemot united in assigning the succession to Edward, who had already distinguished himself during the wars with the Danes. Some, however, were of opinion that his elevation was an act of injustice towards the sons of Alfred's elder brother Ethelred. But prince Ethelwald, after some ineffectual opposition, fled to the Northumbrians, who recognised him as the legitimate sovereign. With their assistance he infested the coast of Essex ; and other Danes, perhaps instigated by him, landed in Kent, but were unsuccessful. In the year 905, other attempts were made on Mercia, but Ethelwald being unable to make friends among the Saxons, Edward gained a complete victory over him, and not only rendered his rival harmless, but compelled the Danes to renew the treaty which had been concluded between Alfred and Guthrun of East Anglia. Henceforth Edward, to the end of his reign, devoted himself most vigorously to the business of securing what had been gained, and uniting

the whole of England under the sceptre of Wessex. The Jutes in the Isle of Wight, who had hitherto maintained their independence, now also submitted to Edward, their own dynasty having become extinct.

The peace which was thus restored did not last many years, for the ever faithless Danes of Northumbria again violated their oath in 910 ; Edward with his West Saxons and Mercians invaded their country, and after ravaging it for many weeks, compelled the enemy to renew the oaths of allegiance. In the year following, while England was again in the enjoyment of peace, Edward assembled a large fleet on the coast of Kent, probably with the intention of assisting Charles the Simple of France against Rollo and the Normans ; but the Northumbrian Danes, encouraged by the success of their kinsmen in France, again broke the treaty, and advanced into Mercia as far as Stratford-on-Avon, devastating the country in all directions. On hearing of this, Edward returned with his forces from the fleet, and defeated the rebels in Staffordshire. By this victory England was for a time freed from the inroads of the Danes, while their kinsmen succeeded in obtaining in France the province of Normandy as a permanent place of settlement.

Shortly after these events, Mercia, by the death of Ethelred, the husband of Alfred's heroic daughter Ethelfleda, fell to the crown of Wessex ; Edward, however, allowed the noble queen of Mercia to rule over her dominions, which he strengthened by fortifying and rebuilding several towns, to protect the country against the neighbouring Danes. The same policy led him to erect a number of strong castles, around which in later times flourishing towns sprang up. Having also obtained possession of London through the death of Ethelred, he soon acquired the southern part of Essex, the Saxons in that part casting off, in 915, the yoke of the Danes, and declaring themselves subjects of Edward. While he was thus establishing his power in the east, his sister Ethelfleda protected the western

frontier against the Britons, who had commenced hostilities with Wessex. As the British chief fled to the Danes at Derby, a desperate struggle with the latter took place in 917. Ethelfleda had already gained great advantages, when Edward advanced with his army from the east and completed her success. The Danes in East Anglia and the neighbouring countries now submitted, and solemnly swore that henceforth they would have the same enemies as King Edward, both by land and by sea. These rapid successes were partly owing to the respect which Edward enjoyed, and partly to his prudence in promoting the emigration of several powerful Danes, who wished to join their kinsmen in Normandy.

After this Edward continued his exertions to subdue the Danes : Stamford was taken, and the country north of it subdued ; at York the Danes were induced by Ethelfleda's negotiations to promise on oath to remain obedient to King Edward. Ethelfleda died soon after, in 919. Mercia now became united with the crown of Wessex, and both its Saxon and Danish inhabitants began to show great willingness to submit to Edward, who neglected nothing to secure his northern frontier against the Northumbrians by building new fortresses, such as Nottingham, Bakewell, and Manchester. After a fresh insurrection of the Northumbrians, in conjunction with the Britons of Wales, the king of Northumbria and all his Danish subjects, even those of Strath Clyde in Scotland, recognised Edward as their lord and sovereign, and concluded treaties with him. His dominions were now more extensive than those of any of his predecessors, and the ideas of Egbert and Alfred were realized through his unwearied activity. But when he had reached the height of his glory, he died at Farrendon in Mercia (924). His almost uninterrupted occupation in war, as well as his own inclinations, prevented Edward doing much for the advancement of intellectual culture among his people ; but he did not neglect to make provision for the learned friends

of his great father. Among several legal enactments made by him, none was of greater importance than the one ordaining that all sales should take place within the gates of the castle of the district, whereby he endeavoured to promote and secure fairness in commercial dealings. Edward, who had been thrice married, had thirteen children, all of whom were carefully educated. One of his daughters, Edgiva, was married to Charles the Simple of France, and became by him the mother of Louis d'Outremer.

5. Athelstane was the eldest son of Edward by his first wife, who is said to have been a shepherd's daughter. His reign is in some respects the most glorious in all the Anglo-Saxon period, and every year of it contributed to exalt his own and his people's renown. Edward in his last will had appointed him his successor, and the Witenagemot confirmed the choice, as his surviving brothers were still under age. The ceremony of his coronation was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, after which a person of the name of Alfred came forward, claiming the throne for himself, and formed the plan of seizing Athelstane ; but he was captured and sent to Rome to do penance for his offence, and as he died there after a few days, his estates were seized and given to the monastery of Malmesbury. One of the first acts of Athelstane's reign was to give one of his sisters in marriage to Sithrik, a Northumbrian prince, who now received Northumbria as far as the Forth as a fief from Athelstane ; but as the prince died the year following, Athelstane, after expelling Sithrik's sons by a former marriage, incorporated Northumbria with his own kingdom. One of the expelled princes was kindly received by Danes who had established themselves in Ireland ; another took shelter with Constantine, king of Scotland, while a third went to Wales, and various attempts were made by them to recover their dominions. Athelstane's arms however, were victorious, and the British chiefs who had united with Constantine of Scotland against him, were obliged, in 926,

to renew their oath of allegiance, and the Scots appear to have been obliged solemnly to renounce paganism. The town of Exeter was abandoned by the Britons, and the rivers Wye and Tamar were made the boundary between the Britons and Saxons. The connexions subsisting between England and the continental powers were increased and strengthened by marriages of Athelstane's sisters with foreign princes, the most illustrious of whom was Otho the Great of Germany, who married Edith. While thus the king's power and influence were extended by his victorious arms at home and brilliant connexions in distant parts of Europe, he displayed at the same time great liberality towards churches and monasteries in England as well as abroad. But no merits and no efforts of his own were able to wipe away the stain which, in the opinion of some, the low birth of his mother had left on his escutcheon, and the more he tried to efface it the more conspicuous it became. The feeling that on this account he was disliked by many, led him to a cruel persecution of his brother Edwin, whom he suspected of aiming at the crown. Shortly after this, in 934, Constantine, the vassal king of Scotland, assisted by the king of Cumberland, determined to make himself independent, and forthwith commenced hostile operations ; but Athelstane advanced into the interior of Scotland, and his fleet chased the enemies' ships as far as Caithness. Constantine now again submitted to the English king, gave his own son as a hostage, and peace was restored.

During the early part of the reign of Louis d'Outremer, Athelstane made great efforts to keep his nephew on the French throne, and while his attention was directed towards that quarter, his humbled but unsubdued enemies in the north availed themselves of the favourable opportunity. A son of the Northumbrian prince, who in the beginning of Athelstane's reign had fled to Ireland, had married a daughter of Constantine of Scotland, and this connexion revived the idea of an independent Northumbrian kingdom, which might form a

strong bulwark for Cumberland as well as for Scotland against the English. Accordingly, a very extensive league was formed among the Danes of England and Ireland and the Scots against the kingdom of Athelstane. The allies assembled a large fleet in the Humber, and York was taken. Athelstane, not being fully prepared, contrived to gain time by negotiations, until, in 938, he felt himself in a condition to venture upon a great battle, which was fought at Brunsbury in Northumberland. Both parties fought with all the fury and animosity which the different nations felt against one another. This battle, in which the superior skill and discipline of the Saxons gained the victory, is one of the most celebrated in the history of the middle ages. Its results decided the superiority of England, and Athelstane now reigned in peace until his death, in 940. This glorious achievement, which at once made him king of all England, and the valour he had displayed throughout his reign, at length did away with the ill feeling which had existed in many quarters against him on account of his birth; and as he left no heir to whom the crown might have descended, even the uneasiness that was left died away with him. Athelstane had done much during his reign to establish law and order, which were frequently violated during the conflicts of the hostile races. The legal enactments ascribed to him are not only renewals of ancient customs and statutes, but include many new and salutary regulations, some of which may be regarded as the basis of the local self-government that is still a characteristic feature of English towns and cities.

✓ 6. Edmund, the eldest surviving son of Edward, and the step-brother of Athelstane, had given signal proofs of personal valour in the great battle of Brunsbury, and after the death of Athelstane, the Saxons willingly recognised him as the lawful successor. The Scots and Danes, ever ready to take advantage of any occurrence, and hoping to overawe the new king, rose in arms. The fugitive Danish prince of Northumbria, Analav,

was called from Ireland and proclaimed king of the Northumbrians. The insurgents were joined by the Danes of Mercia and East Anglia. Edmund indeed succeeded in forcing his enemies to recognise him as their sovereign, but this was effected very slowly and only partially, for even the archbishop of York had joined the pagan rebels. At Tamworth in Mercia, Edmund, in 943, suffered a severe defeat, but with great perseverance succeeded at last in obtaining possession of Mercia and the well fortified Danish pentapolis, Derby, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Leicester. A treaty was then concluded, in which Edmund ceded to the Danish prince all the country east of Watling Street ; Analav adopted Christianity, and his example was followed by several other Danes of high rank. Soon after the conclusion of this treaty, however, Analav died, and the power of the Danes, which had latterly been so formidable to the English, fell to pieces. Reginald, a brother of Analav, and a younger Analav, were expelled ; and after two years Edmund recovered possession of the territories he had ceded to the Danes.

The year after this Edmund attacked Donald of Strath Clyde, and having conquered him, restored Cumberland to its former vassal chief, Malcolm I., a son of Constantine of Scotland ; and for a whole century the relation between Cumberland and England was not disturbed again, while Strath Clyde remained independent for several centuries under the successors of Donald. Edmund's career was cut short by an act of violence, such as was then very rare in England. A man of the name of Leolf, who had been banished for robbery, contrived to find his way into the king's dining-hall with the intention of murdering him. Edmund drew his dagger, but was anticipated by Leolf and killed on the spot, in the month of May, 946. Edmund had been twice married, and left two sons by his first wife, Edwy and Edgar.

7. As Edmund's sons were still very young, the Witen-

gemot raised his brother Edred to the throne. At his coronation at Kingston, the oath of allegiance was taken not only by the English, but even by the princes of Wales, the king of Cumberland, and Malcolm of Scotland, who thereby acknowledged themselves to be his vassals. Three years later the same oath was taken by all the Northumbrians and the archbishop of York; but they soon repented and cast off the yoke, for Harald, king of Denmark, sent his son Eric to Northumberland, hoping that he might be able to establish himself there as king. The young prince on his arrival, was welcomed not only by the Danes, but by the archbishop of York and the other clergy of the country. Edred, unwilling to abandon his rights, entered Northumberland with a numerous army and ravaged it. Terrified by the king's quick and prompt proceedings, the city of York speedily returned to obedience, and Eric, who had fled into a forest, was treacherously murdered with his two children. Edred allowed his wrath to be pacified by fresh oaths and rich presents, though the archbishop was deposed and imprisoned for a time. Northumberland, the country between York and the Lothians—York, the southern part of Northumbria, being separated from it—was given to Osulph, who had caused the death of Eric, and his family continued to govern that country until the Norman conquest. The organization and fortification of the newly recovered territory seems to have absorbed all the energies of Edred during the last years of his reign. He died in November 955, without issue.

8. Edwy, a son of Edmund, was unanimously chosen by the Witenagemot. He was a young man of great beauty, but his brief reign is mainly remarkable for the misfortunes he brought upon himself by his thoughtlessness. Even at his coronation, he became involved in a dispute which formed the commencement of a long protracted struggle of the rising power of the monastic orders against the state and the secular clergy.

Edwy was married to the beautiful Elgiva, and owing to the near relationship between him and his wife, the marriage was considered to be contrary to the laws of the church. During the coronation-banquet, Edwy, leaving the hall, hastened to his beloved Elgiva. The nobles, offended at this conduct, sent after him the abbot Dunstan, who addressed the king in a passionate and disrespectful tone, and brought him back to the banquet-hall. During the disputes to which the occurrence gave rise, the old clergy of the country sided with the queen against the stern Benedictine monks, who opposed the marriage of priests and paid a servile deference to the papal see, to which the English clergy had never been accustomed.

It had of late become evident that marriages of priests might prove dangerous to the state as well as to the church, inasmuch as a married priest might be tempted, for the sake of his wife and children, to disregard or even renounce his faith, and join the enemies merely for the sake of earthly gain. The monks, who advocated celibacy among the clergy, were headed in this movement by Dunstan, a very pious and learned but ambitious monk. This man, descended from a noble West Saxon family, had in his earlier years been educated in the school at Glastonbury, where many young Scots earned their living by instructing the sons of noble Saxons. He was of a sickly constitution, but zealously devoted to study, and his attachment to the ancient national poetry of the Saxons led people to suspect him of having a leaning towards paganism. But this suspicion vanished when he entered upon monastic life, which had recently been much improved by the introduction of the Benedictine rules among the monastic orders. In the seclusion of the cloister, Dunstan occupied himself much with the arts of music, painting, and working in metals, which were then beginning to be employed for the purpose of enhancing the attractions of public worship. In his twenty-second year he was raised by King Edmund to the post of abbot of Glastonbury, where he first

introduced the rules of the Benedictines. During the reigns of Edmund and Edred, he devoted himself entirely to the duties of his office; and he might perhaps have spent his whole life in improving and extending monastic discipline, had not the incident at Edwy's coronation-banquet drawn him into the arena of political strife. In consequence of his inconsiderate conduct on that occasion, the queen became the willing organ of the secular clergy, who had long been annoyed by the ascetic severity of the monks. A plan was soon formed to overthrow the abbot and expel all the Benedictines. King Edwy demanded the surrender of all the treasures intrusted to the monastery of Glastonbury, and Dunstan fled into Flanders, where he stayed for some time at Ghent. On the advice of indiscreet councillors, Edwy closed the convents of the Benedictines; and by acts of violence and avarice on the one hand, and indulgence and connivance on the other, he soon exasperated a large number of his subjects. Mercia, the eastern states, and Northumberland, revolted; and after a short period of ruinous anarchy, they, in 957, proclaimed his brother Edgar, then only fourteen years old, king. The new kingdom was separated from Wessex and the states which adhered to it by the river Thames; while in the north it extended as far as Edinburgh. Dunstan now returned and was made bishop of Worcester and London, on the understanding that he should guide the councils of the new king. Unfortunate as this was for England and its king, Edwy was to be tried still more severely. The clergy who had remained faithful to him, now pressed him to divorce Elgiva, and he was obliged to yield to their demands. She was dragged out of the palace by her husband's own soldiers, and banished to Ireland, and her countenance was cruelly disfigured with hot irons, in order to deprive her of her charms. When the wounds were healed she returned to England, but was seized at Gloucester and put to death with fiendish tortures. Edwy himself died soon after in the same place, perhaps murdered by his enemies.

9. By the death of Edwy, the whole kingdom became united under his brother Edgar, who has been called the most fortunate among the Anglo-Saxon kings, for he reaped the fruits of the labours of his predecessors, and the fact that Scandinavia had already sent forth its surplus population, secured to some extent peace from that quarter. Edgar himself showed remarkable docility towards his experienced adviser Dunstan, and great willingness to conciliate the different nationalities composing his kingdom. Dunstan remained the soul of the government; but it must be owned that he employed the power to which his ambition had raised him, for promoting the good of the kingdom, so far as he could thereby serve the church and himself. He was made archbishop of Canterbury, in which office Pope John XII. heartily confirmed and strengthened him; and he now contrived, wherever it was feasible, to fill the episcopal sees with Benedictines, for whom Edgar is said to have founded no less than forty monasteries. They thus became the most powerful order in England, and it cannot be denied that they laboured most zealously for the education of the people and for a better discipline among the clergy.

During the first five years of Edgar's reign, we scarcely hear anything of him; his life however was very far from exemplary, Dunstan conniving at his licentious and dissolute conduct. But notwithstanding this and several extraordinary calamities, such as epidemics and fires, which made great havoc in London and reduced St. Paul's Cathedral to ashes, Edgar enjoyed the affections of his people and the respect of his enemies. In order to secure England against the Danes who had settled in the country, it was necessary also to extend his dominion over those who had established themselves in the surrounding islands and on the coast of Ireland. For this purpose he kept up a large fleet, which he himself inspected annually. This measure so completely secured his dominions against foreign invaders, that he obtained the surname of

the Peaceful. But still his reign did not pass away without great military achievements. In one of his first expeditions he subdued the Danes in Ireland, and took Dublin—the first Anglo-Saxon conquest beyond their own island. The king of the Britons in Wales refused to pay the annual tribute, probably because his subjects were too poor to raise it, and Edgar henceforth contented himself with receiving annually three hundred wolves' heads, an arrangement which shows that he was desirous to promote the breeding of sheep. The result was so beneficial, that four years later it was impossible to make up the requisite number of wolves' heads. The administration of the northern part of his kingdom seems likewise to have engaged much of Edgar's attention. He is charged with too much indulgence towards foreign settlers among his Saxons, who are said to have been corrupted by their influence, having become effeminate through the Flemings, and addicted to drinking through the Danes. In 973, Edgar was crowned and anointed at Bath by Dunstan : why this was not done before, and what was the object of the late ceremony, is unknown ; it may, however, have been a mere scheme of Dunstan's to make the kingly power feel its dependence upon the church. Soon after his coronation a diet was held at Chester, at which all his vassals took the oath of allegiance to him, and eight vassal kings rowed the proud monarch, seated in a barge, on the river Dee, where, accompanied by a numerous retinue of nobles, he celebrated a grand triumphal procession. Two years after this festival, in 975, Edgar died. He had been strict in the administration of justice and rigorous in demanding the tithes for the church ; he also bestowed great care upon the improvement of trade and commerce.

10. Edgar had been twice married, and by his first wife Elfreda he had a son Edward, who at his father's death was only thirteen years old. His second and surviving wife Elfrida was anxious to secure the succession to her own son Ethelred,

a child of seven years old. The disputes arising from this circumstance were settled by Dunstan, who solemnly proclaimed and crowned Edward; but the hostile ecclesiastical parties, the Benedictines and their opponents, the latter of whom supported Ethelred, now renewed their ancient quarrel; and attempts were made again to expel the Benedictines and give their monasteries to married priests. Many of the old anti-Romish clergy, who had fled to Scotland, now returned, swelling the ranks of Dunstan's opponents. But the archbishop fought manfully for the cause he had undertaken, and Elfrida began to despair of her son ever succeeding. One evening while Edward was hunting in a forest in Dorsetshire, he stopped before the castle of his stepmother, who coaxingly invited him to enter. But while sitting on his horse and drinking a cup of mead to refresh himself, he was murdered by a hired assassin, and his clerical adherents afterwards declared him to be a martyr.

11. The idea of raising a natural daughter of Edgar the Peaceful to the throne, did not meet with many supporters, and Dunstan at last consented to crown the boy Ethelred, Edgar's son by Elfrida. The boy took the coronation oath, which he was too weak to keep, and his vassals their oath of allegiance, which they were to break so often. Dunstan is said to have foretold his unhappy reign both at the baptism and the coronation of the prince; he did not, however, try by any means to avert the impending danger, but on the contrary conducted his education as if he had been intended to be a monk, although it is evident that something better might have been made of the prince. As long as Dunstan lived, the government was strong enough to resist attacks from without, and to prevent the internal decay of the kingdom. But after his death in 988, the country soon felt the loss of the man who with his strong hand had kept together the nations that were foreign and hostile to one another. Even during the first years of Ethelred's reign, it was manifest that swarms of Scandinavians

were again beginning their ancient piratical pursuits, partly on account of the weakness of their rulers, and partly in consequence of the feuds which were then raging in Denmark between the pagans and the converts to Christianity. In the year 985, various parts of the English coast were ravaged by pirates, and many English were slain or carried off as slaves. The same outrages were repeated in the following years, especially on the south coast, and the same scenes occurred which had been witnessed two centuries before. The Danish prince Sweyn is said to have been one of these pirates, and to have received his first military training among them. Some of these adventurers came from the coast of Normandy, where many of the Norman settlers had not been able to renounce their former mode of life. Ethelred sent an English fleet to Normandy to retaliate, and caused his enemies there great losses; but in the end the English were so completely defeated, that only a single messenger escaped to inform Ethelred of the dreadful calamity that had befallen him. However, through the mediation of Pope John XVI. a peace was, in 991, concluded at Rouen, in which both parties were exhorted to turn their arms against the heathens rather than against each other. In the year in which this peace was concluded, the king of Norway landed with a great force on the east coast, to avenge a defeat which had been sustained there some years before. The invaders, though meeting with a gallant resistance, gained a decisive victory, which so alarmed the king and his councillors, that Ethelred, on the advice of the archbishop of Canterbury, consented to pay the enemy the sum of 10,000 pounds of silver, on condition of his putting a stop to the devastation of the invaded territories; he further promised to supply the enemy with provisions as long as they should stay in the island. By this humiliating treaty Danes were admitted as guests in some of the provinces of England, but they were not much inclined to give up what they had won. The tribute paid to the Danes gave rise to a tax on the laity of England,

which, under the name of the Danegeld, continued to be levied for many centuries after its objects had been removed, and thus occasioned many just complaints. As the strangers did not appear willing to quit the island, Ethelred, in 993, assembled a large force against them ; but as his plans were betrayed, they escaped and harassed the northern coasts of England. In the same year a Danish fleet sailed up the Thames as far as Middlesex, and laid waste the country ; and the year after, the united kings of Denmark and Norway, Sweyn and Olav Triggvason, thinking themselves sufficiently powerful to gain a permanent footing in England, appeared at once in Middlesex, on the coasts of Essex, Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire, everywhere ravaging the country with the greatest barbarity. When the work of devastation was completed on the coasts, they advanced into the interior, committing almost indescribable outrages on the inhabitants. Ethelred, being surrounded by faithless vassals, and himself incapable of any great thought or action, promised to pay to the invaders the sum of 16,000 pounds of silver, which all England was called upon to raise, and furnished the enemies' army with supplies at the expense of Wessex and Southampton. King Olav then had an interview with Ethelred, received the rite of confirmation from the bishop of Winchester, and was adopted by the English king, who loaded him with princely presents. When in the following summer Olav sailed home, he promised never to return to England as an enemy, and faithfully kept his word. Sweyn is entirely lost sight of in these transactions.

The greater part of the Danish and Norwegian armies did not return with their kings to their own country, but continued to roam about on the coasts of Germany, until, that country being completely exhausted, they resolved upon another expedition against England. They landed as pirates at the mouth of the Severn, plundered the coasts of Wales and Devonshire, and laden with spoils returned to Southampton. Many plans were devised to check the ravages of these barbarians, but nothing

of any consequence was effected ; and, in 998, they sailed up the Medway and besieged Rochester, where they cut to pieces a body of the men of Kent who attempted to check their progress. As the excellent arrangements of Alfred the Great and Edgar for the protection of the coast had long been entirely neglected, Ethelred resolved to create a new fleet and raise a land force. The former was soon got under sail, but the formation of a land army was a matter of great difficulty, so that the Danes had ample time to ransack the country in all directions, until there was nothing left to tempt them any longer, whereupon they returned with the booty to their ships.

It was perhaps owing to the large preparations made by Ethelred, that in the spring of the year 1000, the Danes sailed to the coast of Normandy ; but Duke Richard II. soon got rid of them. During the peace which England now enjoyed, Ethelred found it necessary to make war on his own vassals, who refused to contribute to raise the Danegeld ; and in Cumberland he wasted the strength which he ought to have reserved for the Danes, who soon returned and renewed their ravages and devastations on the coasts with impunity, no efforts made by individual nobles being able to check them. The king and his counsellors, therefore, resolved once more to purchase peace of the invaders, and 24,000 pounds of silver were paid to them. It was about this time, and probably with a view to secure the aid of the Normans in France, that Ethelred, after the death of his first wife, married the beautiful and accomplished Emma, daughter of Richard I. of Normandy, who is commonly called the jewel of the Normans. But even her charms were unable to restrain the licentious habits of Ethelred, who dishonoured himself and his house in the arms of courtesans. The Danes, who by the late treaties had been allowed to settle in England as guests, could not without fear and alarm look on this new connexion between England and Normandy, and accordingly now conspired to murder Ethelred and his counsellors and take

possession of the kingdom. The plot, however, was discovered, and Ethelred in his folly saw no other means of saving himself than by anticipating the designs of the conspirators. Orders were accordingly sent in secret to all the towns of England to put to death all the Danes, as persons that had forfeited the protection of the law. This order was executed on the 13th of November 1002, and the Saxons are said to have quenched their thirst for vengeance upon the Danes with merciless cruelty. This general massacre, however, does not appear to have extended to Northumberland, East Anglia, and the towns of Mercia, for there we afterwards still meet with great numbers of Danes.

When the news of this calamity reached Sweyn, whose own sister had been murdered, he made a solemn vow to make himself within the next three years master of all England. In the year 1003, he landed with a large fleet in Devonshire, and treachery among the Saxons themselves enabled him to return to his ships without molestation, after having destroyed by fire the towns of Wilton and Sarum. The year after, he directed his attacks against the East Anglian coast and burned Norwich; but there he sustained a severe defeat; and as the country was suffering from famine and epidemic diseases, in consequence of the incessant ravages of war, Sweyn thought it advisable, for the present, to return home without having accomplished what he had vowed. But in the summer of 1006 he returned with a numerous fleet and landed at Sandwich, destroying everything as usual with fire and sword; he did not, however, venture upon a pitched battle, and withdrew for the winter to the Isle of Wight, from which even during the winter the barbarians ravaged the country in the most fearful manner. Ethelred and his counsellors again saw no way of safety except in purchasing peace for the enormous sum of 36,000 pounds of silver, and the promise to furnish supplies to the Danes in all England. On these terms Sweyn concluded peace, though he had no intention whatever of keeping it.

The unspeakable distress which the country was suffering at last roused the government to make some efforts for its defence, and by means of a tax, called ship-money, which seems then to have been levied for the first time, a fleet was built larger than any that had ever been seen in England. But it was all of no avail: the Danes plundered and ravaged the country every year, and the Saxons were too disunited to offer a bold and successful resistance. One-half of England had already been visited by these terrible scourges, and the king and the Witenagemotes once more offered to purchase peace for 48,000 pounds of silver. But while this enormous sum was being collected, and while in some cases the people had to be compelled by acts of violence to pay, the Danes continued their hostilities. Canterbury was taken in 1012, and its inhabitants were fearfully massacred. King Sweyn, who was well informed of the success of his subjects in England, now resolved to make good his vow. Leaving Denmark to the care of his son Harald, he sailed in 1013 with his sons Canute and Olav to the mouth of the Humber, and advanced as far as Gainsborough, where he pitched his camp. Northumberland, the towns of Mercia, and all the country north of Watling Street, submitted to him one after another. He then proceeded towards Oxford and Winchester. The devastations and cruelties in which he permitted his troops to indulge, seem to have surpassed everything that had yet been experienced in this much-tortured country. The degradation and humiliation of the Saxons then reached their lowest point: the traffic in human beings had become a most lucrative trade, brothers sold their brothers, fathers their sons, and sons their mothers; the fear of the savage pirates had paralysed all the strength of individuals as well as of the nation; in battle one Dane was a match for ten Saxons, and large numbers of them had been seen flying before a couple of pirates. All these evils had come to a point beyond which it was impossible to go. The great earls and thanes of the country, and even the brave

citizens of London, saw no other way of safety except in submission to the terrible conquerors. This submission paved the way for the termination of the misery under which the country was groaning, and for the introduction of Christianity among the barbarians.

Ethelred was now abandoned by all his subjects, and his wife Emma fled to her brother Richard II. of Normandy, who had just concluded a treaty of friendship with Sweyn. Emma was soon after followed by her sons and Ethelred himself. Richard received him honourably and hospitably, although he had often neglected and insulted his sister Emma. Ethelred had scarcely been two months at Rouen, when he was informed by messengers from England that Sweyn had suddenly died at Gainsborough, and that the Danish fleet and army had proclaimed Canute king; but that the Witena, clergy, and laity of England had unanimously declared that they preferred no king to Ethelred, if he would but promise to treat them better than before. Ethelred accordingly sent over a proclamation full of the best and most liberal promises: every Danish warrior was declared an outlaw and banished for ever from England, and Ethelred on his arrival in the spring of 1014 was received with the greatest enthusiasm. Canute was still at Gainsborough, making preparations for war, while Ethelred was marching into the revolted provinces, which he punished with extreme cruelty. Canute and his Danes then sailed to Sandwich, and there landed the hostages who had been given to Sweyn with their hands, noses, and ears cut off, and extorted a tribute of 30,000 pounds of silver for his army assembled at Greenwich. But as he found that some of the most powerful earls still supported Ethelred, he sailed with his small remaining fleet to Denmark, where he tried in vain to persuade his brother Harald to share the government with him, and then in conjunction with him undertook an expedition against the Slavonian Wends on the coast of the Baltic.

For a short time it seemed as if the blessings of peace were to be restored to England ; but it was not to be of long duration. The lawless conduct of the nobles revived the internal feuds, and one of them, despairing of being able to carry out his ambitious schemes by himself, invited Canute to return and take possession of England. Canute accordingly in 1016 landed at Sandwich with a fleet of 200 ships. The Anglo-Saxon armies assembled under the command of Edmund, surnamed Ironside, a son of Ethelred, and the treacherous Edric, a powerful Anglo-Saxon noble, in consequence of whose wicked schemes the armies remained inactive. Edric himself soon joined the Danes with forty ships. In the following year Canute and Edric sailed up the Thames and advanced into Warwickshire, ravaging the country in the usual Danish fashion. As king Ethelred, who was staying in London, did not join the army under the command of his son Edmund, the men dispersed to their own towns and villages. A fresh army was then assembled, but in consequence of a report that a conspiracy had been formed against his life, Ethelred again shut himself up in the fort of London. Edmund now hastened to his brother-in-law, the earl of Northumberland, to collect troops against the invaders. Canute, on hearing this, marched into Northumberland, whose earl and people were obliged to submit to him and give hostages. Having accomplished this, he hastened to London to attack Ethelred himself ; but before he arrived, Ethelred, who had often been indisposed of late, died, in April 1016.

Few princes have reigned so long and been so unfortunate as Ethelred II. ; but although his misfortunes arose for the most part from his own feebleness and incapacity, the church has honoured him with the title of martyr. It must, however, be owned, that wretched as his reign was, the repeated levies of the ever-increasing sums paid to the Danes, and many other indications, show that the material prosperity of the country was on the increase. The class of the ceorls or common freemen

was developing a great and independent power ; but the conduct of the warlike nobility and the great earls produced a state of almost complete anarchy, which more than anything else caused the misfortunes of the kingdom.

12. Divided as England was through the feuds of the nobles and their faithlessness towards the king, the great mass of the people still clung to the ancient native dynasty ; this was especially the case in the towns, which well knew how much they were indebted to the Saxon kings for their privileges and their prosperity, and that they had nothing to expect from the Danes. The Witenagemot assembled in London, together with the inhabitants of the city, accordingly conferred the crown on Ethelred's son Edmund, whose valour had gained him the surname of Ironside. Most of the clergy and nobility, on the other hand, espousing the cause of the prince from whom they expected most benefits and concessions, chose Canute for their king and master. Edmund, however, leaving the dowager-queen Emma in London, and accompanied by his faithful adherents, proceeded to Wessex and there secured his recognition. Meanwhile the Danish fleet appeared before London, calling upon the city to surrender. This being refused, the Danes set about besieging the place, but many of their attacks were successfully repulsed by the brave citizens. During the summer of 1016, Edmund fought almost incessantly against the enemy, and gained several battles. On one occasion he would have annihilated Canute and all his army, had they not been saved by the treachery of a Saxon noble. At last, however, the Danes having received reinforcements, Edmund was overpowered in a battle near Ashdown in Essex ; and this defeat, the only one sustained by him, was brought about by the faithlessness of certain Saxon nobles. Canute pursued the English, and Edmund was ready to fight another battle ; but both kings were prevailed upon to endeavour to come to an understanding without destroying the lives of their subjects. A single combat

was to decide between them ; but the affair ended in a most amicable manner, a treaty being concluded, which secured to Edmund Wessex, Essex, East Anglia, London, and the country southwest of it, while the rest of England was ceded to Canute. The regal title and the crown of England, which Canute had already assumed, remained in the hands of Edmund. After having honoured each other with rich presents, and fixed upon a tribute for the maintenance of the Danish fleet, to which Edmund also had to contribute, the two young kings parted. Scarcely had Edmund returned to London, when he suddenly died in November 1016, probably by assassination, having survived his father only about six months. The Saxon court under the last kings had become so degenerate, and had displayed so much hollow vanity, licentiousness, and wickedness, that it was sinking into almost the same state of degradation and contempt which characterized the court of Constantinople.

13. Immediately after Edmund's death, Canute, king of northern England, summoned all his nobles to a great diet at London. Many, cowardly and selfish, declared it to have been Edmund's will that Canute should succeed him, and take charge of his sons, until they should attain the age of manhood. Edmund's brothers were accordingly excluded from the succession. Canute was recognised by nearly all the nobles as king of all England ; he was crowned in London, and received the customary oaths of his new subjects. Considering the division of his kingdom into a number of small provinces to be unsuitable and dangerous, Canute divided England into four parts, viz., Wessex, which he governed in person, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, which he left to three vassal dukes. He next endeavoured to get rid of all the relations and friends of the late king. Edmund's children found an asylum at the court of King Stephen of Hungary ; but other relations, less successful in their attempt to escape, were put to death or sent into exile. The greatest danger, however, seemed to threaten Canute from

Normandy, where Emma, the widow of Ethelred, was residing with her brother Richard II. Canute, accordingly, resolved to offer her his hand, promising the succession in England to the children who might be the result of the union. The marriage was solemnized in July 1017. Being, however, still very apprehensive as to the fidelity of the Saxon chiefs, he ordered many of them to be put to death. An enormous tribute of 82,500 pounds of silver was the last of the harsh measures by which he endeavoured to establish himself securely on his throne. When his fears were at length removed, he sent his fleet, with the exception of forty ships, to Denmark, which henceforth he governed conjointly with England.

From this moment the conduct of Canute was altered, and whilst as a ruler he cannot be compared to Charlemagne, yet though a conqueror he was not hated, and his subjects appear to have been happier under him than under their last native princes : he acted as a wise and thoughtful king, who knew how to appreciate and promote the blessings of peace. The state of the country was regulated at a diet held at Oxford, and the laws of Edgar, in which provision had been made for the Danes then settled in England, were taken as the basis of the new enactments. Especial care was bestowed upon the administration of justice, in which the king treated the Danes with the same strictness as the Anglo-Saxons. Religion and the church likewise engaged his serious attention, and certain remnants of paganism, which still lingered in many remote districts among the Anglo-Saxons, and had been encouraged by the Danes, were sternly suppressed. The clergy were honoured by him, many churches were built, monasteries were liberally endowed, and not a few foreign ecclesiastical establishments received munificent presents. By these and similar means he effectually won the affections of the Anglo-Saxons. The restoration of what was called St. Peter's pence gained him the good-will of the higher clergy, without offending the people,

who had already ceased to regard him as a foreigner. Many Danish bishoprics, moreover, were given to English priests.

By such prudent and skilful management, Canute in a few years succeeded in establishing his new throne so firmly, that in 1019 he was enabled to leave England and sail to Denmark. Still, however, he thought it advisable early in the following year to return, and the condition in which he found his new kingdom obliged him to banish several of the Saxon nobles ; even some of his own Danish magnates were dissatisfied with his strict administration of justice, and had to be got rid of in a similar manner. But with these few and isolated exceptions, England for several years enjoyed a happy peace, during which agriculture revived, castles, bridges, and roads were restored, and churches and chapels built. But Canute did not confine his attention within the boundaries of his own dominions, which he endeavoured to strengthen and extend in all directions ; he concluded a peace with Conrad II. of Germany, in which the latter ceded to him the town of Schleswig, and thereby made the Eider the boundary between Denmark and Germany ; a daughter of Canute, moreover, was betrothed to Conrad's son Henry. But unfortunately his unbridled ambition to conquer the whole of Scandinavia involved him in wars, which obliged him occasionally to leave England, and caused him serious losses, as he was not always successful with his sword.

By the union of Denmark with England, Canute was enabled to promote the cause of Christianity in the former country, and raise the position of the clergy by connecting them more closely with the see of Rome. He had long entertained a desire to undertake a pilgrimage to the eternal city, and when at last peace was so far established that he could gratify this desire without risk to his dominions, he set out in 1026, and appeared at Rome, the first Danish king that had ever paid homage to the holy see. He took with him rich presents for Pope John XIV., in return for which he obtained certain con-

cessions for the school of the Saxons and other privileges. He remained at Rome until Easter 1027, that he might be present at the coronation of his friend and ally Conrad II.* The emperor, as well as King Rudolph of Burgundy, granted to Canute's subjects who might pass through their dominions as merchants or pilgrims, protection and exemption from certain dues levied upon other travellers. After this Canute returned to Denmark, and what he had hitherto been unable to accomplish by force of arms, he now effected by bribery, and the nobles of Norway proclaimed him their sovereign. Olav, the legitimate king, was assassinated in 1028, and Norway was henceforth governed by Canute's natural son Sweyn.

While Canute had thus been acquiring one kingdom after another, the sons of Ethelred and Emma, the legitimate heirs to the English throne, reached the age of manhood. They had found a place of refuge in the dominions of their uncle Richard II. of Normandy, who, however, had not pressed their claims against Emma's sons by Canute. When Richard II. died, after a reign of thirty years, he was succeeded by his son Richard III.; and as he, too, died soon after, the throne of Normandy was occupied by Robert I., surnamed the Liberal or Diable, the well-known father of William the Conqueror. Canute endeavoured to secure Robert's friendship by giving him his sister in marriage, but the lady displeased Robert, who soon after sent her back to her brother. An ill feeling having thus sprung up between Robert and Canute, the former devised plans for securing the English throne to the sons of his sister Emma by Ethelred. As negotiations for this purpose could not lead to any satisfactory results, he equipped a large fleet; but unfavourable circumstances destroyed a portion of it, and rendered the rest incapable of effecting anything. Canute having become aware of the intentions of the Duke of Normandy, endeavoured to avert the danger by making, or pre-

* See p. 252.

tending to make, concessions in favour of the Saxon princes. Towards the end of his life, he had the satisfaction of receiving the submission of the northern kingdoms of Scotland and Cumberland ; and on the 11th of November 1035, he died at Shaftesbury, and was buried at Winchester. Canute had been one of the greatest and most powerful rulers of northern Europe, but his fame is tarnished by excessive ambition and by unsubdued passions, which often led him to commit acts of cruelty. The great empire he had amassed fell to pieces soon after his death, when England, which had for centuries been overrun by Danish invaders, and had in the end become a province of Denmark, saw the last Danish soldiers quit her shores. During Canute's reign the great Saxon families had been more and more broken up and destroyed, and this circumstance prepared the way for the Norman Conquest, which took place about thirty years after his death.

14. Canute's son, Hardicanute, had already been intrusted by his father with the government of Denmark ; another son, Sweyn, was king of Norway, and a third, Harold, seems to have been left without any special provision ; but the chiefs north of the Thames declared themselves in his favour, and elected him king of Mercia and Northumbria. The Anglo-Saxon population was inclined to support either Edward, a son of Ethelred, or Hardicanute. Queen Emma was anxious to obtain the regency either in the name of her sons by Ethelred, or of Hardicanute. At last it was resolved that Hardicanute should have the country south of the Thames ; but his friends had exerted themselves in vain, for circumstances made it impossible for him to quit his kingdom of Denmark, which was then attacked by the Norwegians. Meanwhile the archbishop of Canterbury refused to crown Harold so long as Ethelred's sons were alive. This circumstance, and the fact of Hardicanute not coming to England, again roused the hope of the Saxon princes, and their friends in England began to mature

their plans. Edward, the elder, landed in 1036 with a fleet of forty ships at Southampton ; but being himself coldly received, and the Normans who accompanied him being vigorously opposed by the country people, he gave up all thoughts of recovering his rightful inheritance by force, and returned to Normandy. The younger prince, Alfred, supported by the count of Flanders, made a similar attempt and was kindly received by the people of Kent ; but his companions were treacherously taken prisoners, and he himself dragged before Harold, who sent him to Ely, where he was tried. Being found guilty, he had his eyes put out and soon after died. This cruel and unjustifiable act cost Harold his popularity. Queen Emma was obliged to take refuge at Bruges ; and Harold, having thus got rid of his most dangerous rivals, caused a proclamation to be made, declaring that Hardicanute had forfeited all claims to the crown of England. He himself was recognised as sole king by the nobility and all the people. His reign was but short and passed away without any important event, except that the Britons of Wales took up arms against England, and were unusually successful.

Hardicanute, who had in the meantime secured his own kingdom against domestic and foreign enemies, was now in a condition to listen to the proposals which reached him from Bruges. He accordingly quitted Denmark with ten ships, and was waiting at Bruges for a favourable opportunity, when news reached him that King Harold had suddenly died at Oxford on the 17th of March 1039.

15. After the death of Harold, all parties in England agreed that Hardicanute had the best claims to the succession, and once more Denmark and England were to be united under the same sceptre ; but it was the last time. Hardicanute had raised greater expectations than he was able to realize. An embassy was sent by the Witenagemot to Bruges to invite him to the throne of his father ; and with a fleet of sixty ships which he had assembled against Harold, he sailed up the

Thames, and was crowned king of England. His mother Emma now resolved to take vengeance on those who had sent her into exile, and had prevented her son ascending the English throne before. Many of the most distinguished men were put to death, and the body of Harold was taken out of its tomb and thrown into the river; but the Danes of London rescued it and buried it in their own cemetery. When at last a reconciliation was effected, Hardicanute rewarded the crews of the fleet which had brought him across. For this purpose he laid a heavy tax on the English, who in many parts of the country openly and violently resisted the impost; the bitterest complaints, moreover, were raised about the insolence of the Danes, who in their haughtiness demanded almost servile submission from the Saxons. Hardicanute and Emma next displayed the greatest liberality towards the monasteries, and largely increased their landed possessions, which had even before been very extensive. As Edward seemed to be quite harmless and unambitious, he was invited, in 1041, to come over from Normandy and live at the English court in a manner suitable to his rank.

Hardicanute's absence from Denmark was taken advantage of by the Norwegians, who renewed their attacks upon his dominion. Being little inclined to leave his new kingdom, where he gave himself up to the most extraordinary debaucheries, he intrusted the command of his forces to a cousin, Sweyn Estrithson, who secretly harboured designs of making himself king of Denmark. But being defeated by the Norwegians he came back to England, and when he arrived, Hardicanute had already breathed his last, having suddenly died of apoplexy during a banquet on the 8th of June 1042.

16. After the death of Hardicanute, who left no issue, the Anglo-Saxon dynasty was restored, for the thoughts of all were directed towards Edward, who was proclaimed king of England, even before the body of Hardicanute was buried. Edward

had at one time eagerly coveted the crown, but had renounced all his claims after the failure of his first attempt ; and the monastic occupations to which he had devoted himself for years, had extinguished in him all the energy necessary for a ruler in his circumstances. He himself was so fully conscious of this, that he implored his friends to permit him to return to a Norman convent. He yielded, however, to the urgent requests which they preferred, in the hope that they might be able to avail themselves of his weakness, and use him as a tool in their own ambitious schemes. The most conspicuous among these friends was Godwin, earl of Sussex, who, besides his own earldom, possessed Kent and the southern part of Wessex, while his sons also contrived to have their possessions and dignities enlarged and increased, and supported their father by the powers they enjoyed as governors of large districts. Godwin induced the king to marry his daughter Edith ; but in consequence of a monkish vow, Edward after the marriage did not treat her as his wife, whence he obtained the surname of the Confessor, which is synonymous with Saint. Edward's coronation took place at Winchester in the spring of 1043. His mother Emma had never had any partiality either for him or his murdered brother Alfred, and she had consented to his elevation only because she hoped to take advantage of his weakness. She refused from the first to surrender the valuable royal treasures, which had consequently to be taken from her by a stratagem, and many of her friends had to be sent into exile.

Apart from these difficulties, Edward had also to contend against foreign enemies, for Magnus, king of Norway, having defeated Sweyn and made himself master of Denmark, appeared with a considerable fleet at the mouth of the Thames, plundering Sandwich and the surrounding country. But meeting everywhere with a vigorous resistance on the part of the people, Magnus withdrew to Bruges and soon after died. Sweyn thus recovered Denmark, and England was freed from the fear of a

Norwegian invasion, the new king of Norway and Sweyn sending ambassadors to conclude a treaty of peace and alliance with Edward. But Baldwin's court at Bruges was still a rallying point for the enemies of the English king, and many Anglo-Saxon exiles repairing thither made open preparations for a war against their own country. This danger, however, was averted by the circumstance that the Emperor Henry III. was then carrying on war against Baldwin, who had committed some outrage on the imperial palace at Nimwegen. Not long after this, several of the most powerful Danes were banished from England on account of some gross acts of violence, and this at once removed the influence which the Danes had hitherto exercised upon the affairs of the kingdom. The fortunate result was that Edward was now enabled entirely to abolish the tax which for nearly forty years had been paid to the Danes, and had been felt to be more oppressive than any other impost. This glorious measure was accomplished in 1049, and henceforth neither Danish ships were seen in the English ports, nor privileged Danish garrisons in the fortresses. All this was highly gratifying to the national feeling of the English, but unfortunately Edward soon after seriously hurt that same national feeling in another way. He had spent the greater part of his life in Normandy, which differed from England in climate, manners, and language; the happy years he had passed there in retirement and devotion, had endeared to him many of the men with whom he had come in contact, and who he thought had just claims to promotion and honour in his dominions. The simple and somewhat rude manners of the Anglo-Saxons were repulsive to him, and the independence they had always maintained of the Roman see, was in his eyes not much better than a fatal heresy. His plan, therefore, was to draw the Norman clergy into his kingdom, and thereby to connect it more closely with Rome. The archbishopric of Canterbury and several bishops' sees and rich livings were accordingly given to Norman ecclesiastics, while churches

and monasteries of Normandy were liberally endowed. An embassy was sent to Rome, and by the request of Pope Leo ix. Edward devoted annually a tenth of all his revenue to the erection of the abbey of St. Peter at Westminster. In short, he endeavoured to introduce Norman manners and customs as much as he could, and his own chancellor was a Norman.

All this the nation might perhaps have borne quietly, had not the powerful Saxon nobles been supplanted in the king's favour by foreigners. The Norman knights, who came as visitors to the English court, behaved with such insolence in the towns on their road as to give rise to riots and bloodshed. The king, indignant at the brave resistance offered by his subjects to his noble guests, ordered Godwin to chastise the inhabitants of Dover, where several Norman nobles had been killed or wounded in such an affray. But Godwin, unwilling to punish his own countrymen for acts which had everywhere called forth the greatest praise, resolved to open the king's eyes and bring before him the complaints of his people ; and, in order to insure success, gathered a large number of followers to back him. But the king also assembled a great force, and it seemed as if the country were about to be torn to pieces by a civil war. As, however, some of Godwin's friends went over to the king's party, the powerful earl and his followers were summoned before the Witenagemot, which ordered him and his sons to quit England within five days. Godwin and some members of his family withdrew to Flanders, while others went to Ireland. But the Norman friends and advisers of the king, not satisfied with this, prevailed upon him even to dismiss his queen Edith. She was accordingly sent into a convent, and several Normans were raised to high honour and power.

During Godwin's absence, William the Bastard of Normandy, with a large retinue, visited the king of England, and all were hospitably received and honoured with splendid presents on their departure. It is not unlikely that this visit may have sug-

gested to William the idea of making himself some day master of the fair island, in which his countrymen already exercised a paramount influence, the more so as his cousin Edward had no children and was not likely ever to have any. The banishment of Godwin and his friends had injured too many interests to remain without serious consequences, and the exiles neglected no means to obtain a triumphant return. Harold, one of Godwin's sons, who had gone to Ireland, returned, in 1052, with the aid of the chief of North Wales; and having defeated their opponents they departed carrying away a vast quantity of booty. Godwin also was making preparations for an attack upon England, and when he arrived with his fleet, the men of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and Essex, received him with great enthusiasm, and the king's fleet could do nothing. In the Isle of Wight, Godwin was joined by his son Harold; both now vigorously prosecuted their scheme, and by their moderation gained many new adherents. At length they sailed up the Thames to London, where Edward awaited them with fifty ships. Godwin and his sons sent a message to the king, requesting him to restore to them their possessions. The king, while hesitating what to do, continued to increase the number of his forces. At last Godwin, unable to restrain his men any longer, advanced upon London both by land and by water, and was favoured by the citizens, while the king's soldiers were unwilling to fight for foreigners against their own countrymen. At this moment Stigand, bishop of Winchester, prevailed on the king to give and receive hostages as a security for the preservation of peace. The Norman party in England looked upon this arrangement as a sign that their influence was at an end, and Robert, the archbishop of Canterbury, escaped with great difficulty to Normandy; many other Normans followed his example, while several took refuge in different parts of England. Godwin and his sons justified their conduct before the Witenagemot, and had their possessions restored to them. Queen Edith also was

brought back to the court. The Normans, both lay and clerical, were with few exceptions outlawed for their insolent and lawless conduct. In this manner the most perfect reconciliation was effected, and the general satisfaction and delight of the people proved to the king that his foolish partiality for the Normans might have brought utter ruin on his kingdom. The national party had thus gained a great victory, and for a time at least England escaped the danger of being politically governed by the Normans and spiritually by the Roman pontiff.

Soon after this, in the year 1053, Godwin died, and in him the Anglo-Saxon party lost their ablest leader. He has been much maligned by Norman historians; but whatever faults he may have had, it cannot be denied that his own interests always coincided with the best interests of the people. King Edward now gave Wessex to Godwin's eldest son Harold, and was henceforth earnestly desirous to secure the succession to those who had a natural claim to it. He caused Edward, the son of Edmund Ironside, who was married to a niece of the emperor Henry III., to be brought back to England from Hungary; and in 1057, Edward, accompanied by his wife and children, arrived in London to the great joy of the people; but he suddenly died before having even seen the king, and not without some suspicion that his death had been caused by Harold.

Some of the Norman nobles who had taken refuge in Scotland, and were joined by the usurper Macbeth, the murderer of King Duncan, now made war upon England; but they were defeated in a great battle, and Malcolm Canmore, king of Cumberland, received Scotland as a fief from King Edward. Harold's authority and influence increased very rapidly, and he made himself extremely popular by his benevolence, his talents, and his success in war against the western enemies of the English, who were ever making inroads from their mountains of Wales into the plains of England, but were in the end compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of the English king. After the

lapse of some years, however, during which England enjoyed a period of profound peace, the Welsh, in 1063, again crossed the borders. This time Harold, not satisfied with driving them back into their own country, pursued them as far as the glens of Snowdon; he then sailed round the coast of Wales, while another division of his forces traversed North Wales. The Britons, dismayed by the vigorous manner in which the war was carried on, banished their kings and sent hostages to Edward, solemnly promising to do all that had been agreed upon in former treaties. The cruelty with which the English at that time conducted themselves in Wales was truly appalling: men and boys were cut to pieces in such numbers that the decrease in the male population was felt very severely. The Welsh were, in fact, so much reduced during this war, that some years later they were utterly unable to assist the English against the Normans; and for a long time they had to bear the yoke of their eastern conquerors, though their feeling of hostility remained unabated.

About this time Harold went to Normandy, and Norman historians are anxious to prove that he brought a message from King Edward, in which William of Normandy was appointed his successor in England. But this statement is highly improbable, for William's claims were very remote, and were derived solely from Emma, the mother of Edward; and in addition to this, William was only an illegitimate son. The person who on the demise of Edward had the best claims, was obviously Edgar, a grandson of Edmund Ironside. Certain it is, on the other hand, that William did everything to induce Harold to assist him in case the throne of England should become vacant. Harold not only made the desired promises, but was obliged to confirm them by a most solemn oath. Honoured with rich presents, he returned to England, whose king was not a little alarmed, when he learned what had happened in Normandy. These events occurred in 1065, and on the 5th of January 1066 Edward died. On his deathbed he had, at the

request of his nobles, named Harold, his brother-in-law, his successor. Edward had been a weak ruler, and all his piety could not make him a great monarch in the eyes of the nation ; but although he did not take the field himself, his brave nobles gained many a victory, extending the power of England far beyond its former limits. Edward really wished the good of his people, and had the rare good fortune of being able to remove many oppressive taxes. Justice was administered during his reign in an exemplary manner, and his laws are the foundation on which many of the liberties of later generations are based. Hence his memory was cherished with affection by the Anglo-Saxons ; and they had all the more reason to do so, when they compared his reign with the foreign domination by which it was both preceded and followed.

17. The numerous claims to the succession which might have been raised after Edward's death, rendered quickness and decision a matter of absolute necessity. The nobles happened to be in London in great numbers, for the purpose of attending the consecration of Westminster Abbey ; the most influential amongst them being Harold's relations, he was elected king, though some voted for Edgar, the grandson of Edmund Ironside. As Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was not recognised by the pope, the ceremony of the coronation was performed by the archbishop of York. Edgar, who in fact could not have been elected on account of his youth, obtained the earldom of Oxford. Harold at once displayed the greatest vigour and energy to secure his own position and promote the good of the kingdom, and no department of the administration was neglected—a fact which is admitted even by his detractors. He had not enjoyed his regal dignity long, when he received intelligence that William of Normandy contemplated making a descent upon England ; and in order to secure himself against such a contingency, he assembled a larger force both by land and sea than had ever been seen in England. Being thus well prepared, he

waited in the Isle of Wight for the arrival of the enemy ; but as the summer passed away without any hostile force appearing, he was obliged, from want of provisions, to dismiss a large portion of his army, and many ships were destroyed by storms. While this was going on in the south, one of the great nobles in the north, who bore Harold a grudge and hoped to make himself king of England, had invited the Norwegians, to whose king he promised the northern half of England. The Norwegians, commanded by the adventurous Ardrada, came across and defeated their opponents near York in a great battle ; but a few days later Harold unexpectedly arrived with a large force, and gained a brilliant victory : the most illustrious of the Norwegians fell in battle, and the rest were allowed to return across the sea, for the apprehensions as to what might take place in the south did not permit Harold to follow up this victory or enjoy its fruits.

Ever since the death of Edward, William of Normandy had been engaged in forming plans to put himself in possession of the kingdom of England, to which, in his own opinion, he had a just claim ; it appears, however, that he himself was not very sanguine as to the success of a landing. At first he insisted on the promise which had been made to him by Harold himself ; when all such attempts failed, and William at last openly threatened to invade England, Harold replied by expelling all the Normans who were still residing in his dominions. When William heard of this, he declared to the assembled nobles his determination to make good his claims on England by force of arms, if they would assist him in the undertaking. The majority opposed the scheme, but William gained them over one by one. Seven hundred ships were soon got ready, and knights and mercenaries were invited from all parts of France, and attracted by the promises of rich rewards. The kings of France and Denmark, and the emperor of Germany, were applied to for assistance, but none of them was

inclined to listen to his rash proposals. One important ally, however, was gained in Pope Alexander II., who, being instigated by Hildebrand, sanctioned and blessed the expedition as an undertaking against the "perjured usurper." The pope by this means hoped to secure for the papal see a greater influence in England than it had hitherto possessed. Nay, it is even said that, as Harold had not been very liberal towards the church, the pope excommunicated him, so that the war against him almost assumed the character of a crusade against a heretic. In the month of August 1066, the fleet assembled at St. Valery, but was detained for several weeks by contrary winds. Nearly sixty thousand warriors were assembled, and the delay was very inconvenient, since time was thus afforded to Harold to return from the north of England, and discontent and want of discipline were increasing among the Norman troops. At length, on the morning of the 27th of September, the Norman armament sailed, and on the 29th one part landed at Pevensey and the other at Hastings, without meeting with any opposition. Harold was celebrating his victory at York, when he was informed of the landing of the enemy. Instantly he returned to London with his mercenaries, but found it impossible to assemble a sufficient army within a short space of time. Nevertheless, however, he rejected the proposal of William to cede to him the country south of the Humber and retain for himself the north of England. Several other proposals met with no better reception from Harold. The Normans had in the meantime built a fortified camp near Hastings, and ravaged the country round about. On the 13th of October, Harold arrived with his army, reinforced by Danish auxiliaries, while his fleet was cruising near the south coast to cut off the retreat of the Normans. On the following day, the latter advanced to the attack, and the sight of their numerous cavalry almost deprived Harold of his presence of mind; but he rallied, and for a time victory seemed to be on his side. William's valour and courage, however, suc-

ceeded in staying the flight of his men ; the fight was resumed with renewed vigour, and the defeat of the Anglo-Saxons was soon decided. Harold and two of his brothers fell fighting bravely around the standard of England. On the battle-field near Senlac the papal banner was planted in the place of that of Harold, and William afterwards built on the spot a richly-endowed abbey, called Battle Abbey. He had now gained a firm footing in England, and became the founder of the Norman dynasty in this country. Harold left behind him several sons who fled to Ireland ; one daughter took refuge in Denmark, and afterwards married the ruler of Russia.

18. Britain, which had first been brought under the influence of European civilisation by the Romans, was withdrawn from it, after a period of about four hundred years, on being conquered by the Anglo-Saxons. These, when once established in the island, after having crushed or repressed the natives, developed a Teutonic civilisation of their own, until by the introduction of Christianity they were once more drawn into the current of European or rather Roman civilisation ; but they were not carried away by it so far as to lose their own strongly marked national character. Although their progress was but slow, yet they soon eclipsed their brethren, the inhabitants of the parent country on the continent ; so much so, that in the time of Charlemagne the most illustrious scholars and divines of Saxon England were invited by that monarch to aid him in his endeavours to promote civilisation among his German subjects. At the time of the Norman Conquest the state of intellectual culture among the Saxons was little, if at all, inferior to that of the French Normans, though the latter had undoubtedly the advantage of greater refinement in their manners and outward signs of civilisation. The cultivation of the soil appears to have reached about the same state of perfection as that which existed at the time when the Romans evacuated the island. A class of free peasants was preserved

during the Anglo-Saxon period, notwithstanding the frequent inroads and conquests of the Danes ; nay, it must be owned that the settlements of the Danes, who were most closely related to the Saxons in manners and language, and who had become completely amalgamated with them through Alfred and Canute's wise legislation, formed a powerful constituent of the Teutonic population, which maintained its character even after the country was conquered and overrun by the Normans.

The laws of Ina ordered that the greater portion of the large estates should be kept under cultivation ; and the Angles have the merit of having first drained the extensive marshes of East Anglia, which thus became the most fertile portion of England. Although the breeding of cattle always continued to be the chief employment of the Anglo-Saxons, yet gardens also are frequently mentioned during the latter period of their independence. The regulations prevailing in their towns show fewer traces of Roman influence than those of any other country that had once been governed by Rome, and everywhere we discover the same foundations as in Germany itself. The administration of the towns was universally connected with the institution of guilds, one of whose chief objects was to maintain peace among the community. Commerce flourished and was extended even during the predatory invasions of the Danes. The connexion with Rome, both ecclesiastical and literary, which had never entirely ceased since the days of Gregory I., became indeed more important after the time of Egbert ; but the Saxon spirit of independence was ever struggling against the cunning attempts of the papacy to establish its supremacy in Britain. The spreading of the order of the Benedictine monks, dating more especially from the time of Dunstan, seemed to pave the way more and more for such a predominating influence of Rome ; yet it could never be carried to the point which it had reached in France even at a very early period, and it was reserved for the Norman conquerors to draw England completely into the

great ecclesiastical communion with the papal see—a communion destined more than anything else to unite and civilize the nations of the West. The development of the Anglo-Saxon literature, such as had been contemplated by Alfred, was indeed now completed ; but the Conquest checked its further growth, and it died away ; in its place, however, there arose under the influence of the French Normans that Christian romantic poetry which forms so characteristic a feature of the middle ages.

19. During the period discussed in this volume, the history of Scotland and Ireland is buried in utter obscurity, except at times when they come in contact with England, either through missionary labours or the contingencies of war ; and their real and authentic history does not commence till shortly before the period of the Crusades.

The great body of the inhabitants of Scotland, whom the Romans called Caledonians, were according to all appearance a people of Gothic or Teutonic origin ; such at least was their native tradition, and such we must infer to have been the case from the description which Tacitus gives of the physical appearance of the Caledonians. The influence of the Romans, though they ruled the country for some time, at least as far north as the Forth and Clyde, does not appear to have been very great, and they certainly have scarcely left any traces of themselves in names of towns or other localities. During the Anglo-Saxon period there existed a small independent kingdom in the valley of the Clyde, called Strath Clyde, whose people appear to have been Celts. To the north of this kingdom, a nation called Picts acted a conspicuous part during the Saxon period ; who they were, has been matter of many discussions ; but there can be little doubt that, like the great body of the Scottish people, they were a Teutonic race. The name of Scotland does not occur until the year 934, and is derived from a people called Scots, who immigrated into Scotland from the north of Ireland—an event which is said to have taken place

as early as the year 360. They were unquestionably Celts, and belonged to that branch of the Celtic nation which was and still is designated by the name of Gael. They soon spread over the west of Scotland, and established themselves especially in the parts called the Highlands of Scotland, where their descendants exist to this day. These Picts and Scots were from very early times the great terror of their southern neighbours in the north of England; and it is said that the Britons in England were induced, by the perpetual inroads of the Picts and Scots, to invite the Saxons from the continent of Europe to come to their assistance. It must be observed here, that the south of Scotland, the country between the Forth and the Tweed, belonged to the kingdom of Northumbria, which formed an integral part of Saxon England. The people of Scotland north of the Tweed, if we except the Celts in Strath Clyde and the Scots in the Highlands, accordingly, were as purely Teutonic as those of any of the English provinces, or, in other words, they belonged to the same great stock as the Anglo-Saxons. This fact accounts for the apparently anomalous circumstance which we have already noticed, that during the Anglo-Saxon period, Scottish scholars not unfrequently could establish themselves in England as the instructors of young Saxon nobles, and that in times of trouble and insecurity in the south, many Anglo-Saxons found shelter and protection among their kinsmen in Scotland. After the conquest of England by the Normans, the influx of Anglo-Saxons into Scotland became still greater, and the Norman kings of England naturally looked with no kind feeling on a country, which harboured and protected those who from hatred or fear had fled from their dominions.

During the invasions of England by the Danes, Scotland did not escape unscathed, and many of them settled in the coast districts. About the year 900 the Norwegians took possession of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and in the course of time

extended their conquests so far as to embrace even Caithness and Sutherland. But as both Danes and Norwegians belonged to the great Teutonic race, they only served to increase the Teutonic population of Scotland.

The whole of Scotland north of the Forth is said to have been united in the year 843 under one king Kenneth Macalpin, but his history has come down to us in such a form that it is scarcely possible to regard it as authentic. The annals of Scotland become somewhat more trustworthy about the year 1037, when Macbeth, well known from the tragedy of Shakspeare, ascended the throne of Scotland, after having murdered its rightful king, Duncan, at the instigation of his ambitious wife. Malcolm Canmore, the son of Duncan, who had escaped to the court of England, avenged his father ; for in 1056 he returned with an armed force, and defeated and slew the usurper in Aberdeenshire whither he had fled.

The first great step in the civilisation of Scotland was made about the year 565 by St. Columba, an Irish priest of great learning and piety, who introduced Christianity into the western part of Scotland. The disciples he sent forth to preach the gospel among the other inhabitants of Scotland were called Culdees, and the Christian church they founded was, and remained for a long time, wholly independent of Rome. The central point of Scottish Christianity was then the island of Iona, where St. Columba himself founded a monastery, which became the chief seat of learning and the nursery of future missionaries. But still a considerable time had to elapse before Christianity was embraced by all the inhabitants of the country.

Ireland, though in a political point of view it acted a still less important part than Scotland in the history of the world during the Anglo-Saxon period, was yet far in advance of it in point of civilisation. The whole of the island was inhabited by Celts ; the conquest of England by the Romans and its sub-

sequent occupation by the Anglo-Saxons did not affect Ireland, except that perhaps some of the Britons of England, dreading the cruelty of the Teutonic conquerors, took refuge on the other side of the Irish Channel among their Celtic brethren in Ireland. So far as we know, Ireland did not suffer from any foreign invasions until about the year 800, when the Danes made their first appearance on its coast; and in consequence of the peace which the people were thus permitted to enjoy, the Irish were enabled to develop whatever elements of civilisation they possessed more fully than the inhabitants of the sister island. This development received a great impulse through the introduction of Christianity, which seems to have been brought into Ireland by eastern missionaries, or at least by such missionaries as did not recognise the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, though common tradition mentions St. Patrick as the apostle of the Irish, who is believed to have been a native of the valley of the Clyde, and to have arrived in Ireland about the year 432. Irish Christianity differed in several points from that form of it which was introduced at a somewhat later period into England by Roman missionaries; and this circumstance led to a considerable antipathy between the Roman church of England and the independent church of Ireland. The introduction of Christianity into Ireland was speedily followed by the invention of a peculiar alphabet based on that of the Romans, and it is quite certain that, for about three centuries before the Norman conquest of England, learning was in a very flourishing condition among the Irish; nay, there still exist historical records in the Irish or Celtic language, which are founded upon chronicles almost coeval with the introduction of Christianity.

About the year 800 the Danes began the same ravaging incursions into Ireland with which they visited England, and for a time it seemed as if the whole island would fall into their hands. They displayed the most wanton cruelty towards monasteries and churches. Tradition relates that at last, in 969, the Danes

suffered a great defeat, in which 3000 of them were slain. In 1001, Ireland was united under the sceptre of one ruler, Brian, but the Danes continued their periodical inroads, during one of which Brian, after having gained a brilliant victory over them, was killed in 1014. The unity which was then established in Ireland did not last long, for feuds and broils between the several parts of the country soon broke up the island into a number of petty kingdoms.

CHAPTER VI.

SCANDINAVIA.

1. Scandinavia in general ; 2. Denmark ; 3. Norway and Iceland ;
4. Sweden.

1. SCANDINAVIA is the name given by the ancients to the country comprising the three modern kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The Romans, who never pushed their conquests beyond the river Elbe, knew little of Scandinavia beyond its name, though towards the end of the imperial period a considerable trade in furs appears to have been carried on between those northern countries and the empire. Some of the nations which during the great migrations in the fourth and fifth centuries contributed to the overthrow of the western empire, are said to have come from Scandinavia ; nay, more than a century before the Christian era, the Cimbri are stated to have come from the same country, which was hence called the Cimbrian peninsula. But it was not till about the time of Charlemagne that the Scandinavians began permanently to engage the attention of the southern nations by their piratical expeditions, during which, as we have seen, they ravaged and plundered the coasts of Germany, England, and France. They then appeared under

the name of Danes, or the more general designation of Normans, that is Northmen. Their country was divided into several kingdoms, though at times they were united under one ruler.

The inhabitants of Scandinavia, who must have entered the peninsula from the south, belonged to the Germanic or Teutonic stock of nations ; and one of its most famous branches, the Goths, subsequently migrated southward and established the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy and that of the Visigoths in Spain. There also existed in Scandinavia a tribe called Fins (from whom Finland derives its name), a nation totally foreign to the Teutons ; but they were expelled by the Germanic occupants of the country. The time when these Germanic settlers arrived in Scandinavia is unknown, though it is certain that they were established there as early as the time of Tacitus. When once settled in those countries, so rugged and difficult of access, being surrounded on nearly all sides by the sea, they developed their Teutonic character with more freedom from foreign influence than occurred in any other country. They brought of course their language and religion with them at the time of their immigration, and being separated from other nations, preserved their habits and customs in greater purity than their southern brethren, who came into frequent collision with Romanized Celts and Slavonians. Their native love of freedom and adventure found a freer scope on the wide expanse of the sea than in the wild and often dreary plains of northern Germany. Their early history is an almost unbroken succession of wars and maritime expeditions in all directions. As only the eldest son of a family could inherit his father's property, and as the barren country offered but scanty means of subsistence, great numbers gained their livelihood by piracy and predatory descents upon foreign coasts. These habits increased by custom ; the love of deeds of arms and of adventures, combined with the longing always felt by Northmen after the treasures of the south, stimulated them to acts of danger and daring ; and whoever

returned home enriched by the spoils of foreign lands, was sure to meet with honours and the praise of the native bards. We have already seen how bands of these daring adventurers permanently established themselves in France and Italy, and how for a time they enjoyed the undisputed sovereignty of England.

Their mythology, though in substance the same as that of all other Germanic tribes, is better known than that of Germany itself, partly because it maintained itself freer from foreign influences, and partly because the popular belief in it lasted till a much later period. Their religion was a polytheism resembling in many points that of the Greeks and Romans. Their supreme God was Odin, the creator of the world, the father of gods and men, and the giver of prosperity and victory. The Scandinavians clung with great tenacity to their ancient religion, because it was intimately interwoven with their national life and their legendary history. As early as the reign of the Emperor Louis Debonnaire, Ansgar, a pious monk of Corvey, who afterwards became the first bishop of Hamburgh, made the greatest efforts to introduce Christianity into Scandinavia, whence he is often called the apostle of the north; but it took two centuries before the worship of Odin was completely overthrown by the light of the gospel. During this period of struggles between paganism and Christianity, the Scandinavians, in their intense attachment to the religion of their fathers and its legends, thought they were rendering a most acceptable service to their gods by destroying Christian churches and monasteries wherever they found them, and by murdering the Christian priests at their very altars. After the adoption of Christianity, however, they gradually entered into a close connexion with the church of Rome, and thus commenced a new career of development and civilisation.

2. We have already seen how the Danish king Sweyn or Svend, and still more his great son Canute, ruled not only over

Denmark, but over Norway, Sweden, England, and Scotland. During the reign of Canute, the constitution of Denmark, which had a strong support in the church, still preserved its ancient simplicity. The sovereignty belonged in reality to the people, consisting of free landholders, who, however, left all agricultural pursuits to be performed by their slaves. The kingly dignity was indeed hereditary, but no king was allowed to ascend the throne without the consent and sanction of the people, a circumstance which occasionally led to interruptions in the hereditary succession, or to stipulations on the part of the people, to which the new king had to submit. This solemnity took place at Isöre in Seeland, a spot easily accessible to all the free people of the country. The king had to respond to the oath of allegiance of his subjects by a similar oath, in which he promised to govern according to the national laws. At the time when Christianity was introduced, the king lost his priestly character, which in the old national religion had formed one of his main attributes, and his functions henceforth were limited to those of supreme judge and chief commander in war. The king attended in person the popular meetings (*things*) for the purpose of administering justice ; but this practice seems to have been somewhat abused, for it is stated that Canute forbade his people to refer matters to himself instead of to the ordinary judges, unless the latter should refuse to afford redress. In his capacity of commander of the military forces, it was the king's duty to protect his dominions against foreign invaders, but he could not undertake an offensive war without the consent of the people. At home and in times of peace, all free people stood on a footing of perfect equality, but in war all obeyed the king or the person appointed by him to command the army. But here, as elsewhere, the king's power in the course of time increased in a very natural manner : things which were at first given to him as mere presents or tokens of respect, gradually became obligatory ; the royal revenues were multiplied, and it

ultimately became a principle of the kingdom that all forests and pasture lands, which had no special owner, should belong to the king. A legally recognised aristocracy did not as yet exist, but a nobility gradually arose out of the class possessing the largest amount of landed property. Towns there were, but we find no traces of municipal institutions except such as relate to commerce.

When the family of Canute the Great became extinct, in the year 1047, Svend Estrithson, a son of his sister Estrith, ascended the throne, and in spite of long protracted wars with Magnus of Norway maintained himself on it until 1076. The dynasty of Estrith henceforth remained in possession of the Danish crown until the year 1448. Svend Estrithson was not successful as a warrior, and it was in vain that he renewed the attacks on Norway and England. Owing to this want of success, he did not enjoy the esteem of his warlike people, and was obliged to look to the church for support. On the advice and with the assistance of Archbishop Adalbert of Bremen, he divided Denmark into four bishoprics. After Adalbert's death, Pope Gregory VII. demanded of him to give up his kingdom in accordance with some previous promise, and to take it back as a fief of the church, in return for which the pontiff offered to create a separate archbishopric for Denmark. But Svend was unwilling to sacrifice the independence of his people for such a prize, and the relation between Denmark and the papacy for a long time remained in a somewhat unsatisfactory condition; a whole century elapsing before a Danish king received the unction and crown from the hands of an ecclesiastical dignitary.

Svend was succeeded by his five sons, Harald, Canute the Saint, Olav, Eric, and Nicholas, who governed the kingdom one after another. The second of these, who reigned from 1080 to 1086, raised the bishops to the rank of the first estate of the kingdom, in which he imitated the example set by the princes

of Germany ; and after this time the bishops frequently appear at the national diets and as chancellors of the kingdom. The example of the bishops appears to have soon been followed by wealthy and influential laymen, for not long after we find in Denmark a nobility, forming a compact body, and the ancient equality of all free men disappeared more and more. On the death of Eric, the fourth son of Svend, who engaged in a crusade to atone for a murder he had committed in a fit of passion, and died in Cyprus 1105, the town of Lund in the south of Sweden, which then belonged to Denmark, became the seat of the archbishop of the whole empire.

3. In Norway there had existed from the earliest times a tendency to divide the kingdom among the royal princes, called Yarls, and this practice continued until Christianity, combined with a higher state of civilisation, succeeded in uniting the whole country under one ruler. The last blow to paganism was struck by Olav Trygväson, who ordered Lade the chief seat of the ancient gods and kings to be utterly destroyed ; the inhabitants of the place had a district assigned to them at the mouth of the Nid, where, in the course of one summer, a considerable town Nidaros (Drontheim) arose. In the year 1000, King Olav fell in a naval battle against the united kings of Denmark and Sweden, and the conquerors, in accordance with the national predilection, distributed the greater part of Norway among the descendants of the ancient yarls. But this state of things did not last long, for Olav, surnamed the Stout or the Saint, a descendant of the royal family, contrived to make himself the sole ruler of the kingdom. He remodelled the ancient national laws in accordance with the spirit of Christianity, and the people submitted to the new regulations. In the year 1028, he was driven from his kingdom by Canute the Great, and the rule of the many yarls was restored under the supremacy of Canute. This restoration of polyarchy was not indeed intended to revive paganism, but rather to restore the free in-

dulgence in piracy which Olav the Saint had endeavoured to suppress with all severity. Sweyn or Svend, the son of Canute the Great, however, was deprived, in 1035, of the sovereignty of Norway by Magnus, a son of Olav, who, without any opposition on the part of his subjects, obliged them to pay tithes for the maintenance of the church. When Magnus died in 1066, the old partiality of the Norwegians for the government of many manifested itself again in the repeated divisions of the kingdom. The peaceful pursuits of commerce, however, were steadily increasing, and Olav III., surnamed the Peaceable, a younger son of Magnus, founded the town of Bergen, which soon became a commercial place of considerable importance, for he fostered the development of municipal institutions and regulated the affairs of the ancient guilds.

Ever since the year 874, when Norwegians settled in Iceland, that island had been a place of refuge for all those Scandinavians who were dissatisfied with the state of things at home, and wished to continue their ancient national life free from the influences that were brought to bear on the institutions of Norway. In Iceland, therefore, the ancient mythical and heroic legends were preserved longest and in the greatest purity, for Christianity was not adopted by the islanders until the eleventh century.

About the year 1100 forty epic poems were collected and combined into one whole by Sámund Sigfusson, under the name of the Edda, that is, Wisdom. Its most interesting part is the *Völuspa*, or the poem of the sibyl *Völa*, which treats of the whole of the northern mythology, from the creation of the world to its supposed destruction. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Snorro Sturleson extended these poetical traditions in prose, and reduced them to a complete mythico-historical system, known under the name of the new Edda.

Even Harald Harfagr had had the intention of governing Iceland by a yarl sent into the island from Norway ; but the

islanders refused to admit him, and the subsequent kings down to Olav the Saint had to content themselves with levying a tax on every Icclander trading in Norway. The Icelanders had a republican form of government, the power of making laws being vested in the popular assembly called Allthing ; and it was this same assembly which decreed the adoption of Christianity. A native bishop of Iceland is mentioned as early as 1056. In the year 1096, the national assembly, on the advice of their bishops, decreed the introduction of tithes for the maintenance of the clergy, but the burthen was laid on in such a manner that the richest had to pay least. A fourth of the tithes, however, was applied to the support of the poor, whose number seems to have greatly increased since the introduction of Christianity, for the new religion at once put a stop to the national practice of exposing newly-born children, if the parents were unable to rear them, and of slaying the poor and infirm during seasons of scarcity. The art of writing was soon diffused by Christian priests, and, in 1118, the Allthing drew up a code of written laws called the "grey goose," which remained in force until the abolition of the republican institutions in 1264. Olav the Saint demanded that the Icelanders, like his Norwegian subjects, should pay a head tax, but the demand was rejected by the Allthing, and the king was obliged to be satisfied with the small tribute from those Icelanders who came to Norway as traders.

It deserves to be noticed here as a remarkable fact, that about the end of the tenth century, the Icelanders discovered Greenland, and that even America was known to them under the name of Winland, from the vines growing wild there. It must further be observed, that, according to all appearance, Iceland during the middle ages enjoyed a less severe climate than at present, for it would seem that the valleys extending to the sea-shore were well wooded, and that corn was grown under the protection of the woods.

4. The introduction of Christianity into Sweden proceeded very slowly, partly on account of the nature of the country, and partly on account of the different tribes inhabiting it; for besides the Swedes proper, Westgoths, Eastgoths, and Fins, inhabited parts of the country, and the whole was not united under one monarch until the new religion had taken firm root among the inhabitants. In the reign of King Olav Skautkonung, who died in 1022, Westgothland was the chief seat of the Christian religion. By renouncing the title of sacrificial king of Upsala, and calling himself king of the Swedes, he offended both the Swedes and the Goths. The former, who in their mountainous country were mostly attached to their ancient paganism, demanded that he should choose a separate part of his kingdom where he might adopt the Christian worship, but that he should leave their religion undisturbed. He accordingly chose Westgothland, and did not destroy the old heathen temple of Upsala as he had intended. This arrangement was observed by his successors, the third of whom, Stenkil (1052-1066), thereby succeeded in consolidating the kingdom. But immediately after his death, feuds arose between the Swedes and the Westgoths, partly from religious antipathies, and partly from the desire of one people to obtain the ascendancy over the other. During these struggles the royal family is said to have become extinct. At first, however, the house of Stenkil maintained itself upon the throne, and two of his sons are said to have reigned in common, the elder of whom, Inge, commanded all the people to be baptized. But Svend, the king's brother-in-law, who was the most powerful man among the Swedes, opposed the measure, and insisted on the continuance of the ancient sacrifices. By this means he acquired such popularity among his countrymen, that they raised him to the throne under the name of Blot Svend, that is, Svend the Sacrificer. About the year 1100, however, he had to succumb to Inge, who was succeeded by his brother Halstein,

previously Inge's colleague in the kingdom. Halstein's sons again reigned in common. At last Kol, a son of Blot Svend, is said to have embraced Christianity in his old age, and thus to have paved the way for the general introduction of the new religion. He was probably the father of Sverker, who afterwards, being supported by the Eastgoths, waged war against the last descendants of Stenkil, and ascended the throne of Sweden in 1133.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLAVONIC NATIONS AND THE HUNGARIANS.

1. The Slavonians in general; 2. Russia; 3. Russia under the successors of Wladimir the Great; 4. Internal condition of Russia, 5. Poland; 6. Hungary.

1. THE Slavonians formed the last great wave of nations of the Indo-Germanic stock, that advanced westward into Europe. As on their arrival they found the southern and western parts already occupied by other peoples, their westward progress was stopped, though they succeeded in spreading along the southern coast of the Baltic, and penetrating far into the interior of Germany, for at the dawn of the history of that country its northern and eastern portions were inhabited by Slavonic tribes. The time of the Slavonic immigration into Europe can no more be ascertained than the arrival of any of the other great branches of the European family. But the countries in which they permanently established themselves are the wide plains in the east of Europe, which, being easily accessible at various points, were taken possession of by many different tribes at a very early period. The Slavonians however appear from the first

to have formed by far the greater part of the population, though they must have been thinly scattered over the vast extent of country, and were in many parts separated from one another by extensive forests. In the south-east of Europe a Tatar race called Chazars were established ever since the seventh century ; about the tenth, the Petshenegs, a wild nomadic tribe, pressed forward from the lower Volga ; while in the west the Slavonic tribes of the Lechs and Wends occupied Poland and parts of Germany.

Constantinople, which was still the wealthiest and most civilized city in Europe, kept up a considerable commerce with the Baltic, both by land and by the great rivers, to provide the south with amber and furs from Scandinavia ; and ever since the time when the Arabs took the coasts of Syria from the Greeks, even Indian commodities were conveyed to the Baltic from the Caspian Sea through the countries of modern Russia. In this manner there had sprung up some important commercial places, such as Novgorod on lake Ilmen, which was not, as some have supposed, founded by Normans, but had existed long before their arrival ; Kiew, the greatness of which is mentioned by Byzantine, Arabian, and German chroniclers ; Smolensk, and several other towns in southern Russia.

2. The Scandinavian Normans who, as we have seen, ravaged and conquered the western coasts of Europe, did not confine themselves to these quarters ; the Baltic also opened to them fields of enterprise in the east, and about the year 859, a body of Normans, under the name of Warjazi or Varangians, conquered the country about Novgorod, which was then the capital of a northern principality, while Kiew was the chief city of a separate kingdom on the south of the Dnieper. The Slavonians are indeed said at first to have expelled these Teutonic invaders, but being soon after involved in wars among themselves, a party sent messengers to the Normans of the tribe called Russ, inviting them to come, and promising obedience to them. Accordingly,

three brothers, Rurik, Sineus, and Truwor, went over ; Rurik settled at Novgorod in 862, and two years later, after the death of his two brothers, incorporated their dominions with his own. The Norman name Russians in the course of time spread over a vast extent of country, and Russia was governed by the Norman dynasty of Rurik down to the year 1598.

The great success with which the first Normans and their followers had met, soon attracted many others of their countrymen towards the same quarter. Some of Rurik's own companions, apparently dissatisfied with their share in the conquest, resolved to proceed southward to Constantinople, either for the sake of plunder, or with a view to enter the service of the eastern empire. On their way thither they came to Kiew, which was then held in subjection by the Chazars. The Normans expelled them, and took possession of the town. After this they continued their march, and, in 866, appeared before Constantinople with a fleet of 200 boats. The appearance of these unknown Russ terrified the inhabitants of the city, but they were saved, it is said, by a storm miraculously raised by the patriarch Photius. In consequence of this miracle the Russians are said by Byzantine writers to have asked for teachers of Christianity, who, if the story be true, were the first Christian missionaries among the Russians. Rurik reigned till 879, ruling over his Normans, the Slavonians, and Fins, from the mouths of the Duna and Newa as far as the Oka, and secured the permanent unity of his dominions by conceding the preference to the Slavonic language, being that spoken by most of his subjects. Before his death, he intrusted the regency and guardianship of his son Igor, then only four years old, to his relative Oleg, who by his military achievements became the real founder of the Russian empire. Oleg's first undertaking was directed against the south, where, in 882, he conquered the fortified town of Smolensk, and two years later, by the treacherous murder of its ruler, the city of Kiew, which he made the

capital of his empire on account of its favourable situation on the Dnieper, which formed the great high-road to Constantinople. The Russian name was now at once extended to the southern Slavonians. After having subdued the Slavonians and Chazars in the country about Kiew, and repelled a predatory inroad of the Magyars or Hungarians, he undertook in 907 an expedition against Constantinople, with a fleet of 2000 boats, each containing forty warriors, while his cavalry followed by land along the shores. The war was carried on for four years, at the end of which a peace was concluded, granting to the Russians free access to the Greek ports for commercial purposes; but their armed troops were not allowed to approach Constantinople within a certain distance. As to his internal administration, Oleg instituted a tax, the proceeds of which were devoted to the maintenance of Norman mercenaries. Rurik had commenced to distribute lands among his followers, and thus laid the foundation of a sort of feudal system for Russia; but Oleg revoked this regulation, and appointed governors for the various provinces, who were entirely dependent on the central power. He is also said to have founded several towns in his dominions.

At Oleg's death, in 912, Igor, then thirty-seven years old, undertook the government of his hereditary dominions. The Petshenegs who were at that time advancing from the lower Volga, were indeed compelled to conclude a peace, but Igor had to assign to them a district between the Dnieper and the Don. Against Constantinople no undertaking is mentioned until the year 941, when Igor is said to have attacked it with a fleet of 10,000 boats; but the armament was defeated by the operation of the Greek fire, and the whole undertaking terminated in a peace similar to that which had been concluded with Oleg. The Russians, however, continued their piracy both in the Euxine and in the Caspian Sea. Igor, who seems to have been bent upon enriching himself, especially by

increasing the tribute levied upon the conquered nations, is said to have been killed during an insurrection in 945.

Igor's son, Swatoslav, was still a boy at his father's death, whence his mother, Olga, undertook the duties of the government. She is said to have travelled through the different parts of the empire, to have made several new roads, and to have taken especial care of the formation of agricultural settlements. In 956, Swatoslav himself took up the reins of government, and Olga, though already advanced in years, proceeded to Constantinople to be baptized. This was indeed an important step, in as much as it prepared the way for the entrance of Christianity to the Russian court; but still her son resisted all her attempts to convert him. Swatoslav, being of a warlike and enterprising character, subdued the Slavonian and Chazar tribes as far as the Don and Volga, and advanced even as far as Mount Caucasus. While he himself was paid by the Greek emperor to protect his empire against the attacks of the Bulgarians, the forces he had left behind at home repulsed the Petshenegs from Kiew. Swatoslav now conceived the idea of planting the capital of his dominions on the banks of the Danube, where it might more easily become a great centre of commerce. He accordingly resolved to make himself master of the countries about that river, and before entering upon this enterprise, he divided his empire between his two sons. He had already succeeded in subduing Bulgaria, when he fell out with the Greeks, with whom, after a series of warlike operations, a peace was concluded, by which the Russians secured the advantages previously conceded to them; but Swatoslav was obliged to evacuate Bulgaria. On his return home, in 972, he was attacked by the Petshenegs and slain.

After Swatoslav's death, his eldest son Yaropolk expelled his brother Wladimir from the countries over which he had been appointed by his father; Wladimir fled to the Varangians of the mother country, and with their assistance conquered and slew Yaropolk. Having thus become sole ruler of Russia, he, like

his father, endeavoured to extend the boundaries of his dominions, and not only took Volhynia, but pushed his conquests westward as far as the borders of Lithuania. The most memorable event of his reign, however, was his conversion to Christianity. Ambassadors from neighbouring nations are said severally to have recommended to him the adoption of the Mahomedan, Jewish, and Christian religions; but at a meeting of his nobles and the chiefs of towns, he resolved to send out ten intelligent and trustworthy men to inquire into the different modes of worship. When the emissaries reported the results of their investigations, the meeting advised him to follow the example of his wise mother Olga, and embrace Christianity. Wladimir, however, remained undecided, until at last, after a victorious expedition to Cherson, his desire to marry the Greek princess Anna (the sister of Theophano, wife of Otho II. of Germany), induced him to make up his mind. He was baptized at Cherson, which he gave up to the Greeks, and where he received the hand of Anna. On his return to Kiew, he ordered the idols to be destroyed, and, at his command, both the nobles and the people were baptized in the Dnieper. Christianity thus became the state religion of the Russian empire, which by this means entered into closer connexion with the rest of the civilized nations of Europe, but especially with Constantinople, which henceforth exercised considerable influence upon Russia; for Greek priests flocked into the country, and, undertaking the protection of the oppressed classes, became the pioneers of a higher civilisation. Wladimir himself established schools, in which the nobles were obliged to have their sons educated, though the Russian mothers are said to have lamented over this innovation, because they believed their sons were instructed in magic and sorcery. Repeated inroads of the Petshenegs induced Wladimir to build towns for the protection of the frontiers, for he had given up all plans of conquest from the moment he had become a Christian. From the care and

zeal he showed in promoting the good of his empire, he obtained the surname of the Great, and the Russian church still reveres him as a saint. He died in 1015.

Before his death, Wladimir divided his empire among his sons. Its extent was already very great, but the population, agriculture, and commerce were unimportant, and the frontiers constantly threatened by foreign invaders. It was this very danger that rendered the division of the empire almost a matter of necessity, though it cannot be denied that the custom of dividing the country among all the sons of a ruler was carried to excess in Russia, and led to very serious consequences. The different nationalities were taken little account of in these divisions; but as the original inhabitants of the country were gradually amalgamating with their Norman conquerors under the common name of Russians, while the Slavonian character always predominated, especially in the provinces of Kiew and Tchernigov; and as, moreover, all the rulers belonged to the same family, there still existed a sufficient basis for national unity.

3. According to Wladimir's wish, his favourite son Boris was to have been his successor, but his adopted son Svatopolk, who belonged to the oldest line of the reigning family, took possession of the throne in accordance with the established rule of the succession, and at once seized the treasures collected at Kiew. Meanwhile, however, Wladimir's eldest son Yaroslav was ruling at Novgorod, where he had endeavoured to make himself independent even during his father's lifetime. Svatopolk, being a man who scrupled at nothing, even assassinated Boris in order to maintain himself in his position; and Yaroslav, who was not much better, after having committed some atrocious cruelties, contrived to secure the support of the powerful city of Novgorod, by granting its inhabitants many and important advantages; and with their aid, he drove, in 1019, Svatopolk out of the empire. In his capacity of grand-prince or

grand-duke of Kiew, a title which Wladimir the Great is said to have been the first to adopt, he gave, in 1020, to the city of Novgorod a written code of laws, which is the most ancient legal document possessed by the Russians: under his son this code was declared valid for all Russia. In order to secure peace, Yaroslav divided the empire with his brother Mestislav, who, however, died ten years later, so that then Yaroslav again became sole ruler. During his reign, bold adventurers from Novgorod sailed from the Dwina to the mouth of the Ob, for the purpose of increasing the trade in furs. In the south, Yaroslav extended his dominions as far as Mount Caucasus, but he gave Novgorod as a fief to his son Wladimir, a youth only seventeen years of age. At a meeting of Russian bishops assembled at Kiew, in 1051, he caused Hilarion to be appointed head of the Russian church, without having consulted the patriarch of Constantinople; but the independence he thereby wished to secure for the national church of Russia did not last, the ancient relation between the metropolitan bishop of Kiew and the Greek patriarch being restored in the reign of his immediate successor. Yaroslav also did much to promote civilisation among his subjects: at Novgorod he founded a school for three hundred sons of the clergy and merchants; in other places convents were erected as nurseries for the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and several towns were built, the object of which was not more to afford safety to the empire than to protect commerce and industry. His desire to make the Russians one of the European family of nations, is evident from the fact that his sons were married to Polish, German, and Greek princesses, while his daughters were given in marriage to kings of Norway, Hungary, and France. Before his death, which occurred in 1054, he divided his dominions among his five sons, but assigned to Isaslav, the eldest, the throne of Kiew, with the title of grand prince, enjoining on his younger sons the necessity of obeying him as they had obeyed their father. This arrangement to some

extent destroyed the unity of Russia, for it now became a confederation of states, of which Isaslav, grand-prince of Kiew, was the head, and the other princes, with their dominions, the members.

During the first ten years (1054-1064), Isaslav reigned in harmony with his brothers ; but after that period wars arose among them about Novgorod, which had from the first been assigned to Isaslav. During these struggles the Polowzians, who ever since 1055 had been advancing from the country between the Don and Dnieper, ravaged the distracted empire. After being thrice expelled from Kiew, Isaslav fell in battle in the year 1078. The connexion of the Russian church with the patriarch of Constantinople, which he had restored, was no less beneficial to the intellectual advancement of the Russians than to their commerce with the south. The most lasting and perhaps most important of his institutions was the great monastery at Kiew, which became a seminary for missionaries and a safe retreat for art and literature.

Although Isaslav had two sons, he was succeeded by his brother Wsevolod, the oldest member of the reigning family at Kiew, who, however, assigned separate principalities to his two nephews ; one of these, Svatopolk, became Wsevolod's successor from 1093 to 1113. Under both these grand-princes the civil wars among the ever-increasing number of vassal princes were distracting the country ; the Poles repeated their invasions, and Novgorod strove more and more to make itself independent.

4. The Norman rulers of Russia had for a long period to depend for their safety on the Varangian warriors, from among whom the highest officers of the court and the body-guard of the chief were selected, and swarms of whom were invited as mercenaries from Sweden and Norway, as often as there was any necessity. The grand-prince or grand-duke generally disposed of the succession to the throne, but even during his lifetime he usually assigned certain provinces as dependent

principalities to his sons and other relatives. On important affairs of the empire, the grand-prince consulted the nobles, among whom the highest in rank were the princes, which rank they seem to have derived either from their being vassals of the grand-prince, or rulers of provinces. The class next to them in rank were the boyars, who were in fact the ancient Slavonic nobility; but the grand-prince always claimed or had the right of elevating any person to the rank of boyar. Lastly, a class of persons called "guests," that is, foreign merchants possessed of influence through their connexions or their fortune, were likewise admitted to the deliberations of the nobles. The number of towns that had arisen out of commercial entrepôts was but small at the time when the Varangians established their dominions in Russia; the first rulers down to the death of Wladimir increased their number to about twenty-four, but all of them were situated in the south and west of the empire. Novgorod, the great emporium of northern Russia, seems at first to have enjoyed the privilege of electing its own magistrates; but this right ceased even in the reign of Rurik, and was not restored till after the death of Wladimir. The citizens of all the towns, both the ancient and the more recent, were personally free. Trade and industry were only in their infancy, but weaving, tanning, and the art of working in metals, were well known. In the vast country districts, the few scattered inhabitants devoted themselves more to the breeding of cattle than to agriculture, the latter being left entirely to the serfs. The Slavonian peasantry were indeed personally free, but the land they cultivated was not their absolute property. Prisoners of war were made slaves, and a considerable trade was carried on in them.

The introduction of Christianity in Russia, as everywhere else, prepared the way for a better and higher civilisation. The alphabet still used by the Russians, perhaps the most perfect in Europe, was introduced during the ninth century by

Cyrillus and Methodius, the two apostles of the Slavonians; by its means the Scriptures were translated into the Slavonic language, and studied in the schools established by Wladimir. The singing in churches was much promoted by Greeks, whose efforts were seconded by the natural love for music peculiar to the Slavonians. The bishop of Kiew was the ecclesiastical head of all Russia; he was originally appointed by the Greek emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople, without even consulting the wishes of the rulers of Russia; and the clergy, though they received their tithes from the estates of the grand-prince, were almost entirely independent of the political power, and exercised great influence. The fact that the emperors of the East always maintained their supremacy over the patriarch, rendered it impossible for the Greek church to develop and establish that complete system of a hierarchy, which characterizes the church of Rome. But the Russian church, though dependent on the patriarch of Constantinople, was entirely under the control of the metropolitan bishop of Kiew; for he convened the synods, and consecrated the other bishops of the country, after their nomination by the princes: in Novgorod alone the bishops were elected by the people. In this manner the church also contributed towards maintaining the unity of the empire, which other circumstances rather tended to break up into a number of independent principalities.

At the time when Yaroslav changed the empire into a confederation, he made no new regulations concerning the succession, but allowed the ancient custom to continue, according to which the oldest member of the reigning family became the head of the confederation under the title of grand-prince. This gave rise to many disputes, and as the capital of Kiew was not situated in the centre of the empire, the ever-increasing division into separate principalities naturally had the effect of diminishing the authority of the grand-prince. It is true that nearly a century elapsed after the period we are here speaking

of, before some of the minor princes assumed the title of grand-prince ; but at all events the foundation for such disorders was laid by Yaroslav, and had it not been for the fact that the grand-prince had it in his power to suppress as well as to create principalities, the evil would have manifested itself even earlier. The grand-prince had the right to determine on war and peace, and to order the levy of troops, though in important cases he consulted the assembly of nobles, consisting of the princes, boyars, guests, and clergy. The more his power declined, the more that of the minor princes increased : Novgorod, after the privileges conferred upon it by Yaroslav, gradually acquired a completely republican constitution ; its ruler, who had formerly been appointed by the grand-prince, was afterwards elected by the people, who, however, always chose him from among the descendants of Rurik, and sometimes conferred the honour on the grand-prince himself ; but whoever was elected, had to promise on oath to maintain the liberties of the city, and all the material advantages he enjoyed were granted to him under the name of presents. The real head of the republic was a magistrate, bearing the title of possadnik, whom the citizens elected for themselves. The way in which this magistrate exercised the power intrusted to him, was controlled by a body of one thousand of his fellow-citizens, who, like the tribunes of ancient Rome, watched over his proceedings. The aristocracy, if we may use this term, consisting of wealthy landed proprietors and merchants, also took part in the government, and on great emergencies even the assembly of the people was consulted. The church of Novgorod was governed by the archbishop of the city, the second ecclesiastical dignitary of the empire. We may here add the remark that in the course of time the number of boyars was immensely increased, as the princes in their several principalities had it in their power to reward men for their faithful services by raising them to the rank of boyars. A foundation was thus laid for a Russian nobility, although down to the

thirteenth century there existed no legal distinction among the inhabitants of the empire save that between free men and serfs.

In Russia the bishops did not, as in the states of the West, possess any secular power, and the metropolitan of Kiew, who was in every respect dependent upon the grand-prince, was only the first among his equals. Hence the hierarchy, though enjoying the highest respect, did not constitute a formidable power in the state. Even in times of political anarchy, a peace of God was observed on Sundays and holidays. The monastic orders, in particular, did much to support the sick and the poor, to promote agriculture and industry, and to found schools for the education of the people. The monk Nestor, who is called the father of Russian history, wrote the annals of the great monastery at Kiew, and of the Russian empire down to the year 1110. Ever since the time of Wladimir, Greek and German architects were employed in erecting cathedrals at Kiew, Novgorod, and other places. Yaroslav I., who was himself fond of reading, caused many theological works to be translated into Slavonic, and invited singers from Greece for the purpose of improving the music in churches. The ecclesiastical connexion subsisting between Russia and the Byzantine empire, also contributed to the preservation of peace between the two states, which was in fact not disturbed again after the year 1043. The two great cities of Kiew and Novgorod had become most important emporiums, and as early as the year 1018, Kiew had twelve market-places, and eight great annual fairs were held within its walls ; but this commercial prosperity was disturbed by the crusades, for thenceforth the commodities from the east of Asia ceased to be conveyed by the Caspian, and were carried to the western countries by the Mediterranean.

5. Poland, the country of the ancient Sarmatians or Scythians, seems to have been occupied, after the dissolution of the empire of the Huns, by a branch of the Slavonian race

called Lechs, in whose language Pole signifies *a plain*. We do not hear of the existence of any large organized state in those quarters until the time when the German empire began to extend eastward, especially under Otho I. A native tradition of the Poles traces the formation of the state a century further back, to a peasant called Piast or Past, who is said to have lived about the year 850, while other traditions, such as that of the Bohemians, speak of a great Polish empire even at a much earlier period. According to these latter, Leshek, that is Lech, was made king in consequence of his having gained the victory in a horse-race. But these and similar legends are so much interwoven with learned speculations of later ages, that it is almost impossible to distinguish the genuine traditions from the later interpolations. The country about the sources of the river Netze, however, appears to be pointed to in the native traditions as the original home of the dynasty of the Piasts, as well as of the most ancient families among the Polish nobility. That district forms a large and fertile plain from which hills rise towards the north and south, and agriculture seems to have been carried on there from very early times. Its inhabitants were of a warlike disposition, which enabled their chiefs to extend their dominions over the plain, so as to comprise even the districts about the modern towns of Gnesen and Posen. That country, then, must be regarded as the nucleus of the subsequent kingdom of Poland. According to the poetical national legend, Piast was a poor but noble-minded peasant, whom two miraculous strangers rewarded for the hospitable treatment he had shown them, by promising him that his son Ziemovit should one day become king of the country. Ziemovit, that is, the conqueror of the country, is described as the father of Zemimisl, that is, administrator of the country. The history of these two kings is of course mythical, and the dawn of the real history of Poland does not commence until the reign of Miesko or Mieczyslaw, a son of Zemimisl.

At the time when the Germans under Henry I. began to subdue the Slavonic tribes settled between the Elbe and the Oder, they came for the first time into conflict with the Poles. Under Otho I., one of the counts whose duty it was to protect the marches or borders of the empire compelled Miesko, in 963, to recognise the supremacy of the German emperor. Two years later Dubrawka, the daughter of Boleslav, duke of Bohemia, became the wife of Miesko, and by her influence induced him to adopt Christianity. The people, who were ordered to follow the example of their rulers, did not indeed refuse to adopt the new religion, but for a long time after continued many of their old heathen practices. The first Polish bishopric was established at Posen with the co-operation of the emperor Otho I., and from that time Poland was so entirely under the influence of Germany, that Miesko, down to the time of his death in 992, is invariably mentioned as a duke of the German empire.

His son Boleslav I., surnamed the Brave, who reigned from 992 to 1025, was a bold and ambitious prince : he extended his dominions by conquest, regulated the internal affairs of both the state and the church, and laid the foundation of the renewed independence of Poland. In the north he conquered the Prussians and took the town of Danzig, but the attempt to introduce Christianity among them failed. Otho III. of Germany so respected Boleslav as to call him his ally, and in the year 1000, when the emperor personally visited Poland, he declared him king of the Poles and Slavonians. As a further mark of his favour, the emperor established an archbishopric for Poland at Gnesen. By these acts of the emperor, Boleslav became not only the independent ruler of Poland, but the acknowledged sovereign of the many Slavonic races which then occupied the north of Germany between the Baltic and the Elbe. It was in vain that the emperor Henry II. made every effort to keep Boleslav in a state of dependence, for the latter manfully struggled for his kingdom, until, in 1018, its independence

appears to have been formally recognised. While he was thus contending against Germany, Russia was making encroachments on the east; but they too were checked. Great as Boleslav was in extending and protecting his dominions from foreign aggression, he showed still greater zeal as a governor and promoter of the internal welfare of the state. The administration of justice, taxation, and the military organization of the country, appear to have been placed by him upon a solid basis; castles were erected in various parts of his dominions as residences for the civil and military officers intrusted with the administration of the surrounding districts, and this gave rise in after times to the division of the country into castellanies. The rights and privileges of the ruler were as yet not fixed by laws, but the increase of the military forces, rendered necessary by the circumstances of the times, also increased the powers of the chief, who was thereby enabled to keep his nobles in submission. At last, in the year 1025, he caused himself to be crowned king, being desirous to possess the outward honours as well as the substance of power; but he died soon after in the same year.

His son Miesko II. (1025-1034) was neither able to maintain the extent which his father had given to his dominions, nor their independence of Germany. His whole reign was a succession of misfortunes, and he himself was entirely governed by his queen Richza, a niece of the emperor Otho III. At his death, his son Casimir was only a boy, and his widow undertook the regency. Things now became even worse than they had been, and the country fell into a state of anarchy: the nobles rose against the young king, the serfs took up arms against the nobles, and at the same time there was a general abandonment of Christianity. Richza was obliged to retire with her son to Germany, whence they did not return until 1043, when, on the invitation of some of his principal nobles, Casimir recovered his throne by force of arms. He henceforth governed the

country with great wisdom, devoting the remainder of his reign to the re-establishment of his own power and of Christianity. After his death, in 1058, his son and successor, Boleslav II., had at first to engage in numerous wars with the Hungarians, Bohemians, and Russians; and having been successful in them all, he caused himself, in 1076, to be crowned king by his own Polish bishops, hoping by this means to be better able to maintain the independence of Poland during the struggles between Henry IV. and Pope Gregory VII. But his vigorous efforts to establish and strengthen his own power, and his attempts to resist ecclesiastical authority, led, in 1079, to his expulsion from Poland. His younger brother Wladislav succeeded indeed in maintaining himself on the throne without any civil war, but was obliged to give up the title of king and renew the connexion with the German empire. He also became involved in disputes with his own sons, which induced him to consent to a division of his dominions; but the result was that his ambitious and energetic son Boleslav III. soon acquired greater authority than himself. He died in 1102.

The power of the princely chiefs among the Poles had arisen, according to the native tradition, out of the want that was felt of an able commander in war at a time when the nation was threatened by foreign enemies; and it is not impossible that the several tribes, which through the conquests of the Piasts were united as one Polish nation, may originally have lived under republican or even democratic institutions. But agriculture and the breeding of cattle, the chief occupations of the people, here as elsewhere naturally led to distinctions of rank according to the amount of landed property. Even in the most ancient historical documents of the Poles, we hear not only of free landed proprietors and slaves, but also of an intermediate class called *Kmetes*, who were personally free, but had not the same rights as other freemen. The free landed proprietors were the lords of the country, and their estates were cultivated by the *kmetes*

and slaves. During the social development of later times, all the free landed proprietors, whether their estates were large or small, began to form a nobility (*Szlachta*), which throughout the history of Poland has been remarkable for its military skill and valour. The breeding of horses was always carried on to a very great extent in Poland, and the nobles at all times formed the cavalry in the national armies. The *szlachta* were obliged to obey the king, whenever he needed their service in war; but in point of fact they looked upon this more as a right and a privilege than as a duty. The *kmetes*, not being allowed to bear arms, were in the course of time completely reduced to the condition of serfs.

6. About the time when the Avars had been subdued by Charlemagne, a horde of Asiatic nomads appeared in the plains about the middle Danube. These were the Hungarians. Their own native appellation was and still is *Magyars*; the Slavonic nations called them *Ugrians*, from which by a euphonic change *Ungrians* was formed; the form *Hungary* and *Hungarians* is only an invention of the monks of the middle ages. These *Magyars*, who, like the *Scythians* of old, spent almost their whole life on horseback, were a branch of the nation of the *Fins*, and had migrated westward from the country on the east of the *Ural* mountains. During their migration, they had been joined by other tribes, such as the *Tartar Cumani*; and advancing through the north-eastern passes of the *Carpathians*, between *Lemberg* and *Munkacs*, they descended upon the rich pasture lands about the *Theiss* and the *Danube*. This happened about the year 889, when the different tribes already settled in those parts were yet unconnected with one another. The Slavonic occupants were driven into the mountains; but the *Wallachians* maintained themselves in the south-eastern districts. The *Magyars*, with their tents and their cattle, then took possession of the country, which, together with its remaining inhabitants, was distributed among the conquerors. The chief received the largest portion,

and a complete system of feudalism seems to have been established. The number of the conquering Magyars does not appear to have been very large. They, like other nomadic peoples, were governed by elders and the chiefs of their tribes; but during the wars with their neighbours they found it necessary to unite under one chief. The first that was raised to this dignity is called Almus, and his son Arpad became the founder of a dynasty which maintained itself on the throne of Hungary until the year 1301. The hereditary succession in the Arpad dynasty, however, was not determined by primogeniture, but depended upon election by the nobles.

In the year 893, the Emperor Arnulf formed the unfortunate idea of inviting the Magyars to join him in an expedition against the Moravians. The invitation was accepted, and the object of the expedition accomplished; but the Magyars became acquainted with the roads leading into Germany, which was then still far from being united and consolidated, and perceiving their own advantage, they at once resolved to make themselves masters of the country, if they should find themselves threatened by dangers at home. On their return from Moravia they found the land they had quitted occupied by the Petshenegs, and being defeated by them, had no choice but to seek a home elsewhere. Their chief Almus at first led his men against Kiew, which he was on the point of besieging, when a peace was concluded, obliging the Russians to give hostages and pay an annual tribute, while the Magyars evacuated the Russian territory. They now turned towards Pannonia, which was occupied by Slavonians, Bulgarians, Wallachians, and Germans; and were joined in this expedition by many Russians and the Cumani, under seven chiefs. The army increased as it advanced, until it reached the number of about a million. Thus they entered Pannonia, declaring themselves the successors of Attila. At the request of the aged Almus, the people now made his valiant son Arpad their leader and

commander. The Magyars spread far and wide, conquering one district after another; and when, in 899, Arnulf died, they crossed the Danube and the Theiss. In the newly conquered countries they became acquainted with several of the arts of peace, and their language was enriched with a number of Slavonic and German words; but still they could not at once renounce their ancient wandering habits, and for about half a century longer they obtained their means of living mainly by predatory inroads into Germany, France, Italy, and even Spain. Their invasions were as terrible as those of the Huns of old, for everything they met on their way was destroyed and devastated without mercy. In 907, Arpad died and was succeeded by his young son Zoltan. The Germans now hoped to be able to deliver themselves from these formidable enemies; but all the fair prospects soon vanished, and the period which now followed, down to 955, was the most disastrous time that Germany had yet seen. The battle of Merseburg, in 933, freed Germany for a time from their incursions;¹ but it was not till 955 that Otho I. so completely defeated them, that they were unable to renew their hostilities against the west.² They now turned against the Greek empire, which, feeble as it was, proved more than a match for them. Zoltan died about 960, and was succeeded by Toxus, who reigned till 971, and is remarkable mainly on account of his unsuccessful undertakings against Constantinople. His successor Geiza (971-997) had gained the conviction that the Magyars could not exist as a nation, surrounded as they were by well regulated states, unless they themselves adopted a change in their mode of life, for which Christianity alone could furnish a solid basis. Missionaries from Constantinople had already sown the seeds of Christianity in some parts of Hungary; and Geiza's wife Sarolta, the daughter of a Transylvanian prince, who had been baptized, prevailed on her husband to look with favour on the new religion, though

¹ See p. 224.

² See p. 231.

he continued to sacrifice to his ancient gods, declaring that he was rich enough to satisfy the gods of both religions. His people, however, were forcibly compelled to submit to baptism. But it was Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, who, on passing from Rome to his new see, became the real apostle of the Magyars, for he himself baptized Geiza's son Waik (afterwards King Stephen), who married Gisela, a sister of Otho III., and thereby entered into close connexion with Germany. Adalbert afterwards continued the good work he had commenced by sending many and able missionaries from Prague among the Magyars.

Geiza was succeeded by his young son Waik, or as he was called after his baptism, Stephen (997-1038). The young king at once declared his intention to live at peace with all his Christian neighbours; he commanded all the Magyars to be baptized, and all the Christian slaves to be set free. These things, and the fact that the principal persons about the court were Germans, were so irritating to the Magyars that they rose in open rebellion; but with the aid of Germans, Stephen succeeded in quelling the rebels and securing the victory to Christianity and civilisation. In order to raise his own authority among his people he lived in regal splendour, and requested the pope to grant him the title of king and the crown. At the same time he begged the Roman pontiff to sanction the division of Hungary into ten bishoprics, and the appointment of an archbishop at Gran. Pope Sylvester II. not only granted these requests, but left the regulation of the secular and ecclesiastical affairs entirely to Stephen, who was accordingly crowned king at Gran on the 15th of August 1000. Soon after this solemnity, Stephen gave to his kingdom and its church that constitution, of which the main features have remained in force down to the present day. He constituted the clergy the first estate in the kingdom; next to them in rank were the counts (*obergespann*), who were nominated by the king to govern large districts of country in times of peace, and command their contingents

in war. According to the number of these counts, Hungary was divided into seventy-two counties. The free landed proprietors formed the nobility, but whoever was not a Christian could not be one of them, and was at once made a slave. The nobles formed the armed force of the kingdom, and their property was exempt from taxes, on the understanding that it was incumbent on them to defend their country. The pagan Slavonians and Wallachians, as well as those of the Magyars who refused to become Christians, remained bondsmen, whereas all Christian prisoners of war were ransomed and set free. The king presided at the national diets, and the counts and nobles had the right to appear there and take part in its deliberations. The constitutions and laws framed by Stephen were devised with great wisdom and moderation; and the only thing for which he seems to deserve censure is, that in many instances he engrafted German institutions upon a thoroughly foreign nation. Towards the church Stephen's liberality was unbounded, and by it he gained for himself the rank of a saint.

Notwithstanding these peaceful pursuits, the reign of Stephen did not pass away without troubles. Transylvania, which still adhered to paganism, had to be subdued by force, and to secure it against foreign invasion he waged war against the Petshenegs; nay, in 1030, even with Germany a war threatened to break out, in consequence of the insolent conduct of bands of German pilgrims passing through Hungary on their way to Jerusalem; but the consideration of Stephen's great merits in promoting the cause of Christianity prevented serious hostilities. Paganism was not, indeed, entirely eradicated, but it nowhere ventured to show itself openly, for the king, whose piety and devotion were boundless, punished its adherents with the utmost rigour. Towards the end of his reign he was inclined to resign the crown and retire into a convent, for the loss of several children had greatly broken his spirit. While he was in this condition, the queen, who had acquired paramount in-

fluence over him, prevailed on him to appoint his nephew Peter as his successor, who was labouring under a suspicion of having taken part in a conspiracy against the king's life.

Peter ascended the throne, in 1038, amidst serious apprehensions of the Magyars, which were but too soon justified. He displayed the utmost cruelty, and even Gisela, to whom he owed the throne, was cast into prison; Germans and Italians were raised to the highest offices at court and to the rank of counts, while many Magyars were deposed. Outwardly the greatest piety was affected, while in reality the court was a den of licentiousness and debauchery. Such conduct and the king's utter contempt of the Magyars, many of whom in their hearts still clung to paganism, endangered not only the throne, but the very existence of Christianity, which was identified in the minds of his subjects with the interests of the German party. Peter's imprudent conduct even involved him in a war with Henry III. of Germany, the only power on which he could rely for support. When the discontent had reached its height, and Peter happened to be absent from his capital of Stuhlweissenburg, a number of the clergy and nobles met, renounced their allegiance to him, and elected Aba, a brother-in-law of Stephen, for their king. This happened in the year 1041: Peter fled from his country, and Henry III., notwithstanding all that had happened, promised to support him. Aba, who was himself a rude barbarian, allowed the Magyars to wreak their vengeance without restraint upon the foreign friends of Peter. Henry III. made, indeed, a ravaging inroad into Hungary, but finding that the clergy peremptorily refused to restore Peter, he was induced to withdraw his army and recognise Aba as king. The latter now began to surround himself with barbarians like himself, and to remove all bishops from his court; and after having murdered the leading men among the nobles he demanded to be crowned. This was done, though not without great reluctance; but as he refused to evacuate a certain territory which he had

ceded to Henry III., the latter again crossed the frontier with an armed force. In the battle which ensued, Aba was put to flight, and the Hungarian nobles were compelled to receive back their exiled king Peter, who in his own name and that of all his descendants had to promise by a solemn oath to remain faithful to the German emperor and empire, and to govern his kingdom according to German laws. After his restoration, Peter pursued Aba, and defeated and killed him in a battle. His misfortunes had not made him wiser, and his attachment to the Germans, and the preference he showed them on all occasions, provoked the Magyars so much that they again began to look out for another ruler. They found one in the person of Andrew, a relation of St. Stephen, who was living in exile at Kiew. Deputations appeared before him, inviting him to come to Hungary ; and as soon as he saw his way clearly, he undertook the task proposed to him ; but he had to promise that he would not force any man to change his religion, so that paganism might be practised without hindrance. When these preliminaries were settled, the revolution broke out : the Magyars fell upon the German and Italian priests, who were expelled or murdered, and paganism raised its head everywhere. Peter endeavoured to escape into Germany, but was overtaken and had his eyes put out. These events occurred in the year 1047. Andrew, to secure himself against Germany, promised the emperor to restore Christianity, declaring that he had had no share in its suppression, and that he would always remain a tributary vassal of the empire. The emperor, being otherwise engaged, was satisfied with these declarations, and Andrew was crowned by the three surviving bishops of Hungary. The new king remained faithful to his promises, and at once restored the regulations of St. Stephen ; but finding this a more difficult task than he had anticipated, he invited his brother Bela from Poland, giving him the title of duke and one-third of his kingdom. The establishment of a duke by the side of the king was afterwards

found to be a most dangerous arrangement. The proceedings of the Germans in Austria, the border county of Germany, involved Andrew in a war with the empire, in which the Germans were compelled to sue for peace. The negotiations, during which Pope Leo ix. endeavoured to mediate between the two parties, led to no results ; but the death of Henry iii. and other circumstances, in 1055, secured Hungary against all further attacks from Germany. The coronation of Andrew, in 1059, gave rise to bitter feelings between him and his brother Bela, and the unfortunate consequences of there being no law respecting the succession became manifest at once. Bela, unable to brook the idea of being obliged soon to obey his brother's son, rose in open rebellion against Andrew in 1061. In a battle on the Theiss, Andrew was defeated and put to flight ; but he was taken prisoner and died soon after. He was succeeded by Bela, who seeing that his kingdom was in a state of anarchy, and that the pagans were again raising their heads, convened a diet at Stuhlweissenburg, to which two deputies from every county were invited. At this meeting, which may be regarded as the first of all Hungarian diets or parliaments, the majority demanded the restoration of paganism. In this emergency, Bela behaved with great prudence : he attacked the rebellious deputies with an armed force from an ambuscade, punished the offenders, and succeeded in restoring peace and the Christian worship, though not without committing some acts of revolting cruelty. Having re-established peace and order within his dominions, he formed connexions with the neighbouring states by intermarriages ; but a storm was gathering in Germany, where a pretender to the Hungarian crown, Salomon, a son of Andrew, had secured the interest of those who governed the empire in the name of Henry iv. In order to anticipate his rival in action, Bela marched into Austria, but fell from his horse and died in 1063.

The Germans now brought Salomon to Hungary and had

him crowned king ; but Geysa, Belasson, and Ladislav likewise claimed the succession, and an agreement was come to, according to which Salomon was to remain king, while the other claimants were to govern certain counties on the Theiss. This arrangement lasted ten years, until 1074. During that period the rulers acted harmoniously and supported one another, so that Hungary was respected among the nations. But, in 1074, a quarrel broke out between Salomon and Geysa, who had received a regal crown from the emperor of Constantinople. Pope Gregory VII., being appealed to by both parties, tried to take advantage of the dispute, and demanded that Hungary should be regarded as a fief of the holy see. The several rulers at last came to an understanding, but none was honest in his intentions, and, in 1075, a battle was fought between Geysa and Salomon, in which the former was defeated. Geysa was obliged to rely on the support of his brother Ladislav, and the two united met the king's forces and routed them. Geysa went through the ceremony of coronation with the crown he had received from Constantinople, and assumed the title of Grand-Duke of Hungary, though he was determined to assert his independence of the papacy. Salomon being abandoned by his German friends and supporters, maintained himself only in a small part of his dominions. He was besieged at Presburg by Ladislav, and Geysa assumed the title of king, raising at the same time Ladislav to the dignity of duke. During the negotiations which were now entered upon between the rival kings, Geysa died (1077). This event brought about a change, for as all parties had more confidence in Ladislav than in Salomon, the former was elected king ; but he refused to receive the crown until he should have come to an understanding with Salomon and obtained the sanction of the pope. The former object was easily attained, but instead of yielding to the demands of the pope to take Hungary as a fief from the holy see, Ladislav ignored the insolent request and devoted himself to the im-

provement of the laws of his kingdom. For this purpose he assembled a parliament, which enacted a series of laws well calculated to restore order, and check the prevailing custom of cattle stealing. Paganism was quietly increasing, but Ladislav for the present deferred taking any steps against it. He also extended the frontiers of his kingdom by conquering Croatia and Dalmatia. In these countries, there still existed many remnants of paganism, which he now resolved to eradicate, and as his kingdom enjoyed peace on all sides, he summoned, in 1092, a parliament, with a view of finally putting an end to all forms of pagan worship. This object was fully accomplished, and the affairs of the church were regulated on a permanent basis. In 1095, ambassadors from England, Spain, and France, appeared before him with the request to undertake the command of a large army, for the purpose of delivering Jerusalem from the hands of the Mahomedans. Ladislav took up the idea with enthusiasm and began his preparations, but he died soon after in the same year. He had been a brave and pious prince, and had stoutly maintained the independence of Hungary against the ambitious policy of the Roman pontiff. At the close of his reign, Christianity was firmly established in Hungary, and as the language of the Magyars was as yet little fit for literary uses, the influence of the clergy caused the Latin language to be introduced not only at court, but in all the public transactions of the country. Civilisation advanced on the whole but slowly, and the chief occupation of the nation still continued to be the breeding of cattle.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREEK EMPIRE FROM THE DEATH OF JUSTINIAN II.
TO THE PERIOD OF THE CRUSADES.

1. General observations ; 2. From Justinian II. to the accession of the Macedonian dynasty ; 3. Period of the Macedonian dynasty ; 4. Dynasty of the Comneni.

1. DURING this period, the existence of the Greek empire seemed even more in peril than it had been during the age of the great national migrations, from which it had remained almost unscathed, and at the close of which the government of Justinian I. had even shed a considerable lustre upon it. Both its internal decay and the dangers from without were now ever increasing : the death of an emperor and the accession of a new one were always accompanied by tumults and violence, the imperial crown being generally the object of ambition of several rival competitors, and it was not till the year 867 that the Macedonian dynasty succeeded in permanently establishing itself on the throne, which it maintained until 1056.

The disputes about the use of images in churches, which lasted for upwards of a century, from 725 to 842, though originating directly with the emperor himself, made a much deeper impression upon the popular superstition than the dogmatic differences of the preceding period ; the latter had been settled and decided by œcumenical councils, but the gulf between the eastern and the western churches became now more widened, and in the end led to a permanent schism between the east and the west of Europe. The dangers with which Constantinople was threatened by the Mahomedans also became more pressing, and at the same time barbarians from the north began their inroads into the empire. The Bulgarians had been in the possession of Moesia ever since the year 679,

and the Russians, as we have seen, made repeated attacks upon Constantinople itself.

The fact that notwithstanding all this the Greek empire maintained itself for a long period, can be accounted for only by the advantages it still enjoyed in the superiority of its ancient civilisation, as manifested in its well-developed system of military tactics, its political and ecclesiastical institutions, and its wealth and intellectual culture. Constantinople was protected against the attacks of the Arabs as against those of the Russians not only by its excellent situation, but by its powerful navy, and by the invention of the Greek fire. Attacks by land, such as those of the Bulgarians, were successfully repulsed by the superior tactics of the Greeks. The frequent changes of rulers, lastly, which were often the result of external dangers, sometimes raised very able generals to the throne, whose merits are not always duly recognised by the Byzantine historians. As the general corruption increased, despotism rose higher and higher, and the restoration of a strong political union among all parties became more and more a matter of impossibility, because the state had no well organized constitution.

2. After the death of Justinian II. in 711, three emperors followed one another in rapid succession, until at last Leo III., an Isaurian of humble origin, who had conducted the war in the east against the Arabs, raised himself to the throne (717-741). He defeated the Arabs, who again besieged Constantinople by sea and by land, so completely, that henceforth they ventured upon no further attack on the Christian capital of the east. Leo, after restoring order and discipline in the armies, and regulating the administration and the finances of the empire, was even able to take up the offensive against the infidels; in this he did not indeed achieve any great results, but the mere fact of his acting on the offensive altered the position of the empire in its relation to foreign powers. Besides this

brilliant and useful activity in restoring the resources of his empire, Leo also formed the plan of reforming the church, because he believed that the great losses which the Christians had sustained in their wars with the infidels had generally been caused more by the apostasy of the Christians than by the real strength of the Mahomedans, and that the misfortunes of the Christians could be accounted for only by the faults and vices of the church itself. He seems to have gained this conviction during his intercourse with Mahomedans, even before he ascended the throne ; the same conviction was in reality shared by all Christendom, but no one thought of the remedy which occurred to Leo.

Nothing was more offensive to the Mahomedans than the idolatrous worship of images, which they met with in all Christian countries. The theory of the Christian church had as yet always kept aloof from sanctioning this aberration, but popular superstition regarded an image as a living and animate being, to which prayers and vows and thanks were offered. Common sense could not but perceive the absurdity of this image worship, and the Emperor Leo thought himself in every respect justified and able to put an end to the abuse.

In 725, he endeavoured, at first by gentle measures, to stop the worship of images ; but the opposition he met with from popular superstition and from the monks, many of whom gained their livelihood by making images of the Saviour and the saints, drove him to more rigorous proceedings. Unconcerned about any consequences, he now pursued his object entirely to eradicate the worship of images, with a truly military insolence. The exasperation of the people, who would not allow themselves to be deprived of what they deemed sacred, was crushed with bloody severity, and in distant provinces as well as in the capital, the most revolting and sacrilegious measures were adopted for the purpose of restoring the purity of worship. The passion of the people for forming themselves into parties,

even on frivolous grounds, was now goaded to the highest pitch by clerical ambition, court intrigues, and religious fanaticism. Two powerful parties were thus formed, the image-worshippers (iconoduli) and image-breakers (iconoclasts), who for a long time kept the empire in an almost uninterrupted state of ferment and rebellion.

Constantine v. (741-775), a son of Leo III., followed in the footsteps of his father, persecuting the image-worshippers with even greater severity ; but his rigour called forth the most bitter and determined opposition. In one quarter both he and his father met with an invincible opponent. As early as the year 732, Pope Gregory III. had pronounced the sentence of excommunication upon all those who were guilty of the sacrilegious act of image breaking. This sentence indirectly involved the emperor himself, and the breach thus produced between the papacy and the emperor of the East, obliged the former to seek protection against the Lombards and other enemies in a close connexion with the Carolingians. In the East, on the other hand, the fearful brutalities committed by the iconoclastic emperors, destroyed the last remnants of the feeling of obedience and reverence for the successors of St. Peter at Rome. A foundation was thus laid for a permanent and entire separation of the two churches.

Constantine v. was otherwise an able ruler ; he conquered a rival emperor, set up by the iconoduli, and vigorously checked the progress of his foreign enemies ; but he fell at last in an expedition against the Bulgarians.

After the brief reign of his feeble son, Leo IV. (775-780), Irene, the widow of the latter, undertook the administration for her son Constantine VI., but owing to her domineering spirit she was expelled ; being recalled by her son, who felt himself too weak to act independently, she afterwards caused his eyes to be put out, procured his assassination, and then governed the empire in the most arbitrary manner through her favourites. Irene,

like almost all the ladies of the time, the mass of the lower orders, almost all the monks, and a great number of the clergy, had from the first been devoted to the worship of images ; and, in 787, she caused the council of Nicaea to declare the worship of images a holy and religious duty. This decree removed the great obstacle in the way of reconciliation between the eastern and the western churches, and Pope Hadrian I. approved of it ; but the papacy was already too intimately interwoven with the Carlovingian empire and the idea of a distinct western Christianity to renew its ancient connexion with Constantinople. The image-worship in the East now became worse than it had ever been before : it became real idolatry ; in consequence of which a synod convened by Charlemagne at Frankfort in 794, absolutely forbade all worship of images. The unbridled despotism of Irene lasted till 802, when her government was overthrown by her own grand-treasurer Nicephorus ; and soon after this she died at Lesbos, despised and hated by all.

Nicephorus I. (802-811), his son Stauracius, and his brother-in-law Michael I. (811-813) were unable during their short reigns to protect the empire against the Bulgarians, who at that time reached their highest power. At last Leo V., surnamed the Armenian, being raised to the throne by his legions (813-820), introduced military strictness and severity into the administration, while at the same time he checked the progress of both the Bulgarians and Arabs.

After the time of Irene, the dispute about the worship of images had on the whole been in abeyance ; but the abuses of the worship had now become so glaring and offensive that Leo V. thought it necessary to interfere ; as, however, the measures he adopted were of a most violent nature, the powerful party opposed to his proceedings raised his general, Michael II., to the throne (820-829). The disputes, however, went on with unmitigated violence on both sides, and while the empire was thus tearing itself to pieces, Crete was taken by Arab pirates,

and almost the whole of Sicily fell into the hands of the Normans. At last Theodora, the wife of his son and successor Theophilus (829-842), being appointed guardian of her son Michael III., summoned, in 842, a council at Nicaea, at which the veneration of images was solemnly restored, but their worship condemned ; and ever since that time the use of images has been maintained in the eastern church. Theodora was sent, in 856, into a convent by her own ambitious brother Bardas, to whom her licentious son left the entire management of the empire.

3. Scarcely had the disputes about the images been brought to a close, when the conduct of Bardas contributed to widen the breach already existent between the eastern and the western churches. The patriarch Ignatius refused to admit Bardas to the Lord's Supper, on account of some flagrant act of which he had been guilty. Bardas then caused Photius to be elected as a rival patriarch (857). Pope Nicholas I., who acted in this matter with perfect fairness and justice, refused to ratify this election, and Photius then caused the Roman pontiff to be condemned by a Greek synod. This quarrel, which at first had been rather of a personal nature, gradually assumed the character of a controversy about the relation that ought to subsist between the patriarch of Constantinople and the pope. Photius did everything in his power to produce a complete rupture between the two churches, which would have secured to him the undisputed primacy of the eastern church ; but it was neither the interest of the emperor nor of the pope to allow matters to come to such a pass ; and after several attempts at a compromise, which were always thwarted by the obstinacy and animosity of Photius, the latter, in 886, was finally deposed.

During these ecclesiastical broils, Bardas had fallen a victim to the wretched Michael III., who left the reins of government to Basilus, a Macedonian of low origin, but of great energy

and wisdom. Michael's reign was at last brought to a close, in 867, by a conspiracy; whereupon Basilus ascended the throne, and became the founder of the Macedonian dynasty, which maintained itself, though not without interruptions, until the year 1056. From this time the succession of the emperors was somewhat better regulated than it had been before, and many of the disorders so common at the accession of a new sovereign were prevented; but this very circumstance seems to have deprived the rulers of the necessary vigour and energy. The education which the imperial princes received was more calculated to make them scholars than rulers of manly spirit and character, and hence many of the emperors of the Macedonian dynasty distinguished themselves more as authors, though even in this their merits were but small, than as able governors and commanders of armies. It was owing to this unwarlike and unpractical character of the emperors, that the regular succession was several times interrupted by victorious generals. Despotism during this period became more unbridled in proportion as the people became more demoralized and indifferent to public affairs, and even the ancient forms, though mere shadows of the republican institutions of old, were now done away with for ever. Thus Basilus' son Leo VI. (886-911) forbade the passing of decrees by the senate, as incompatible with monarchical government, and the small remnants of self-government in the cities and towns were entirely abolished. A free peasantry seems to have ceased to exist in the empire even some time before these occurrences. The influence of the clergy also was reduced to narrower limits, as they had dared to excommunicate Leo VI. for having, contrary to ecclesiastical law, married four wives one after the other. It soon became a common practice to raise princes of the imperial family and other laymen to the dignity of patriarch; and one of the emperors, Nicephorus Phocas, went so far as to declare that no bishop should be appointed without the imperial sanc-

tion. The clergy, on the other hand, offended their rulers by asserting that the life of a soldier was incompatible with that of a Christian. It cannot, however, be asserted that the emperors of this period devoted themselves too much to military life, for although they studied the military art theoretically—witness the work of Leo VI. on tactics—they left the management of the wars in most cases to their generals. As the dangers of the empire increased, the martial spirit of the armies was roused; and we cannot wonder that occasionally they raised to the throne a man who had led them on to victory. The eastern empire under this new dynasty recovered Asia Minor, a portion of Syria, and the supremacy in the Aegean, while the Bulgarians and Slavonians settled in the empire were compelled to maintain peace, and the possessions in southern Italy were, on the whole, successfully defended.

After the death of Leo VI., the place of his son Constantine VII., who was only seven years old, was taken by his dissolute brother Alexander, who fortunately died the year after (912). But while the guardianship of the young emperor was still in the hands of his relatives, Romanus, commander of the imperial fleet, caused himself and his sons to be proclaimed emperors. Romanus on the throne, however, was no longer the same warlike man he had been before, and while he was engaged in quelling internal disturbances, he implored the Bulgarian king Simeon to maintain peace, and, in 934, even humbled himself by purchasing peace of the Magyars. But against the Russians the empire still maintained itself by its superior military discipline. When at last Romanus was dethroned by his own sons, Constantine VII. reigned alone from 945 till 959. He was not indeed a man of military talent or warlike spirit, but he made up for this deficiency by forming friendly connexions with distant nations, which in time of need might be useful allies against the enemies of the empire. It was in his reign that the Russian princess Olga was baptized at Con-

stantinople, and his connexion with Otho I. of Germany served, in the first instance, to strengthen his power in southern Italy. He was incessantly occupied with the promotion of art, literature, and industry ; and the learned men who, after the marriage of his grand-daughter Theophano with Otho II., introduced Greek learning into Germany, had been mainly trained by his munificence. Theophano's sister Anna contributed towards the consolidation of Christianity and the promotion of civilisation among the Russians.¹

His young son Romanus II. (959-963) thought of nothing but dissipation ; still, however, his generals fought bravely against the Arabs, whose piratical expeditions had become more formidable ever since the time of Leo VI. ; and Crete was once more taken from them. After his death, his widow Theophano, as guardian of her two sons, Basilus II. and Constantine IX., chose the general Nicephorus Scopas for her supporter : he had gained many victories in the east, and now won the throne by marrying Theophano (963-969). But the empress soon became dissatisfied with him and then threw herself into the arms of Joannes Zimisce, who after murdering Nicephorus received her hand and the throne (969-976), making her two sons his colleagues. Zimisce turned out to be one of the ablest emperors that Constantinople had seen for some time. Owing to his friendly relations with Otho II. of Germany, he was enabled to withdraw his troops from Italy ; he repulsed the united attacks of the Russians and Bulgarians at Adrianople, and made Bulgaria a province of the empire (972). After his death, Basilus II. who had been his colleague, succeeded and maintained himself on the throne till 1025. A revolt arose in Bulgaria, which Basilus was at first unable to suppress, but, in 1018, he succeeded in securing the permanent submission of that country. He also raised the naval power of the empire to a point far surpassing that of the Arabs. His brother Constantine, who had been

¹ See p. 374.

his colleague, but spent his life in idleness, died three years after him, in 1028. Shortly before his death he had forced Romanus Argyrus, a man belonging to an illustrious family, to marry his daughter Zoë, and he now became his successor. This Romanus III., who was more distinguished for his learning than for military ability, wore the crown from 1028 to 1034. After his death his widow married her court banker, a Paphlagonian, who under the name of Michael IV. filled the throne till 1041, when, feeling himself unable to discharge the duties of his position, he withdrew into a convent. Zoë then adopted his nephew Michael V., whose government lasted little more than one year, and was in reality managed by Zoë herself. As about this time the Tartar race of the Seljuks began to threaten the eastern frontier of the empire, and Zoë felt the necessity of a strong protecting hand, she, though very advanced in years, offered her hand to Constantine X., surnamed Monomachus (1042-1054). But he was not able to repel the attacks of the Russians and Petjenars on the Black Sea, nor those of the Seljuks in the east, nor those of the Normans who were advancing from Sicily. After his death Theodora, Zoë's sister, conducted the affairs of the empire for two years, not without considerable vigour.

4. During the last thirty years of the Macedonian dynasty everything that had previously been gained was lost through the fault of the emperors. When therefore Theodora died, the eastern army raised the able general Isaac Comnenus to the throne (1057-1059); he was the founder of the dynasty of the Comneni, which, however, did not permanently establish itself until a somewhat later period. Under the wise and vigorous management of this new dynasty the empire maintained itself for a long time, and even got safely through the shocks of the crusades. On the accession of Isaac, Asia Minor had been taken possession of by the Seljuks, who had become converts to Mahomedanism, and had made Iconium

their capital ; Italy was in the hands of the Normans ; the Servians had made themselves independent ; the imperial treasury was exhausted ; and the army as well as the administration were utterly disorganized. Luxuries were ever increasing, and these, combined with the languor and indifference of the people, were the most powerful supports of despotism, which, though opposed by the church, was supported and propped up by the learned lawyers of the time. The emperors, as before, sought their especial glory in being learned, a weakness in which at a somewhat later period even the ladies of the court participated.

The ancient rivalry between the popes and the patriarchs was increased during the ninth century by the fact that the Greek church devoted itself with great energy to the conversion of the semi-barbarous races in the east of Europe, especially of the Slavonic tribes, both within and without the boundaries of the empire. In those countries Greek and Roman missionaries met, and at first the former everywhere outstripped the latter, until the German emperors of the Carlovingian and Saxon dynasties began to take a more active part in the work of conversion, which with them became a great national question. Hence the Slavonians of Moravia and about the eastern parts of the Alps were at first gained over by the Greek church, but after some time it found itself dislodged by the bold enterprise of Roman missionaries. Similar events occurred among the Magyars in Hungary, for there, too, Greek missionaries had already gained a firm footing, when the political ascendancy of the German empire reduced the Magyars to a state of dependence, and thereby gained them over for the Latin church. The Greek church, on the other hand, maintained itself in Russia, among the Bulgarians and the other Slavonic tribes, from the river Drave to the southern extremity of Peloponnesus. The conversion of the Russians, who had before been the most dangerous enemies of the empire, was the most glorious achievement

of the Greeks ; and after the establishment of Christianity in Russia, the peaceful relation between that nation and the empire was never again materially disturbed. In this manner the antagonism between the east and the Germanized west of Europe had been fully developed ; and as the position of the papacy in its relation to the many kingdoms of the west had become more and more independent, while the clergy of the Greek church were kept in strict dependence on the secular rulers, a trifling circumstance was sufficient to bring about a complete and permanent rupture between the two churches. In the reign of Constantine Monomachus, some of the Greek bishops, influenced by the prevailing ill feeling between the two churches, published a vehement attack upon some points of the ritual of the Roman church. This act exasperated the whole of western Christendom, and when the patriarch Cerularius thought it necessary to come forward as the champion of his church, Pope Leo IX. in a very able reply defended the Roman Catholic ritual, and especially the use of unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper. After several unsuccessful attempts at negotiation, Roman ambassadors at last, in 1054, appeared in the church of Santa Sophia at Constantinople, and pronounced a solemn anathema upon the Greek clergy. This step, and the new attitude which the papacy soon after assumed under Gregory VII., completed the schism between the two churches for ever. The Greek emperors in their hearts sided indeed with their own church, and detested the Latins almost as much as they did the barbarians or infidels ; but they nevertheless did not relax in their exertions to restore peace between Rome and Constantinople, because they could not hope for any support from the west, unless the two churches acted in harmony and concord. But the very preparations which were making in the west for the crusades soon showed that all hopes of reconciliation were at an end.

Isaac Comnenus, abandoning the protection of the frontiers

to his brother Joannes, devoted himself to the restoration of the finances, especially by setting bounds to the accumulation of church property by the law of mortmain. His chancellor Michael Psellus, and the great dignitaries of the church, signalized themselves as patrons of learning, and Psellus took especial care of the schools for the education of those intending to devote themselves to the service of the state ; but what he and the court promoted, was not so much real learning as a pedantic smattering of everything. After having filled the throne for two years, Isaac Comnenus withdrew into a convent, having appointed his colleague, Constantine XI., surnamed Ducas, his successor (1059-1067). Constantine was no relation of Isaac's, but followed completely in his footsteps ; nay, while the outward dangers were daily growing more alarming, he increased the number of sophists and advocates, while he diminished the military forces of the empire. His wife Eudocia was even more learned than he ; and when his end was approaching he intrusted to her the guardianship of his sons, on condition that she should not marry again. But after the lapse of seven months Eudocia broke her promise by marrying a friend of the family of the Comneni, Romanus IV., surnamed Diogenes (1067-1071), who is remarkable for his extraordinary vicissitudes of fortune. He was a general in the army, and was brought before a court of justice to be tried for some offence ; but in consideration of his previous exploits, he was not only acquitted, but Eudocia rewarded him with her hand. Three years after this, he was defeated in a battle and taken prisoner by the Seljuks, who, however, treated him with respect, and permitted him to be ransomed. On his return, he found his wife imprisoned in a convent, and Michael VII., the eldest son of Constantine Ducas, on the throne. His own adherents compelled him to surrender to his enemies, who, contrary to their promise, ordered his eyes to be put out. Meanwhile Michael VII. (1071-1078), under the guidance of

the pedant Psellus, allowed the military affairs of the empire to decay, while it was hard pressed by the Seljuks and the Normans. However, that something might be done, two able officers, Isaac and Alexius, nephews of Isaac Comnenus, were put at the head of the armies ; and in order to secure the Magyars on the northern frontier, Michael sent a kingly crown to one of the Magyar chiefs.¹ The frontiers towards the Croats, Bulgarians, Servians, and Bosnians, were protected by the general Nicephorus Bryennius, who in return for his services was made the colleague of Michael. The latter, however, was soon dethroned by a rival, Nicephorus Botaniates (1078-1081), who in his turn had to give way to Alexius Comnenus (1081-1118), whose family henceforth maintained itself on the throne of Byzantium for more than a century.

Isaac Comnenus and his successors, though well intentioned, were utterly unable to avert the dangers with which the empire was threatened from within as well as from without, and were looking anxiously for support from the west ; but the conviction that no help was to be expected from that quarter dawned upon them when it became known with what intentions the Latin Christians were preparing for the crusades.

CHAPTER IX.

SPAIN.

1. General remarks ; 2. Mahomedan or Moorish Spain ; 3. Christian states of Spain ; Asturias ; 4. Castile ; 5. Navarre ; 6. Aragon ; 7. The Spanish march ; 8. Portugal.

1. WHILE in the east the Arabs, notwithstanding their other conquests, had been unable to gain possession of Constantinople, the kingdom of the Visigoths in the extreme west of Europe

¹ See p. 394.

had been overpowered and annihilated. There the Arabs extended their conquests from the luxurious plains of Andalusia northward as far as the river Duero, which became the boundary between them and the Christians ; in the north-east, they had even crossed the Pyrenees and entered France, but here their progress had received a fearful check in the great battle of Poitiers. This defeat deprived them of all territories they had acquired in France with the exception of Septimania, which they retained until the time of Pepin. In Spain itself, the Arabs had from the first abstained from attacking the mountainous countries in the north, and as soon as the Visigoths, who had taken refuge there, felt strong enough, they commenced a struggle against the Mahomedan conquerors in the south, which was continued till nearly the end of the middle ages, when the invaders were finally driven from the Spanish peninsula.

When Abd-el-rhaman, the last survivor of the Ommiyades, supported by a powerful tribe of the African Berbers, appeared in Spain, in 755, the Moors established there were already at war with one another, which enabled him without much difficulty to put himself in possession of Cordova, the residence of the representative of the eastern caliph. As, however, he had continually to struggle against a hostile party, he did not venture to claim the title of caliph, but was satisfied with that of emir. It was these enemies of Abd-el-rhaman, who called in the aid of Charlemagne against him.¹ The emperor marched into Spain with two armies, and after taking Saragossa by storm, subdued the whole country as far as the river Ebro. This conquest had to be maintained even during the lifetime of the conqueror by repeated wars, which were conducted by his son Louis ; but the country was secured by being constituted as a frontier march (Spanish march), under the civil and military administration of counts. Its dependence, however, was notwithstanding all this of a precarious nature, and as early as 798, Saragossa was again

¹ See p. 166, *seq.*

in the hands of the Moors. Barcelona, on the coast, which was conquered by Louis in 801, and was enabled to keep up a communication with France by sea, remained, under the dukes of Septimania, the principal station of the Frankish monarchy on the south side of the Pyrenees.

The Ommiyades in Spain had thus to keep up a perpetual war against the Spanish march and the Christians in the north, where the remnants of the Visigoths soon succeeded in establishing independent principalities. The small bands of Goths in the Pyrenees were unable to rally so far as to form an independent power, until one part of the Spanish march separated itself from the rest. There, as well as in the north, the Christians gained strength only by very slow degrees, so long as Mahomedan Spain continued to rise in power and influence ; but when at last the Mahomedan empire declined, the dominion of the Christians rapidly extended towards the south.

2. At the time when the infuriated Abasides exterminated the Ommiyades, only one member of the family survived, Abd-el-rhaman, a grandson of the caliph Hisham. On his arrival in Spain his name and descent procured him a favourable reception ; he was saluted as king, and he and his descendants continued to reign for nearly three centuries, from 756 to 1031, over Mahomedan Spain. Previously the country had suffered from civil wars among the Mahomedans, and the cruelty of their governors, in consequence of which the majority of the people were hostile to the Abasides. Still, however, the party favourable to them opposed Abd-el-rhaman, until the latter having defeated them in two battles entered Cordova in triumph. Henceforth the Mahomedans in Spain were politically independent of the eastern caliphate. Abd-el-rhaman's reign (756-788) was long and prosperous. The Christians in the north, profiting by the civil dissensions among the Moors, had advanced southward, but the new ruler drove them back into the mountain fastnesses of Asturias. Cordova, the capital of his

kingdom, was enlarged, fortified, embellished, and provided with ample supplies of water. The building of the great mosque, which is still used as a Christian church, was commenced by him. He formed ship-yards along the coast, and is said to have been the first to transplant the palm-tree and pomegranate into Spain. Science, literature, and the arts, were not neglected by this excellent monarch.

Abd-el-rahaman was succeeded, as he himself had desired, by Hisham, one of his many sons (788-796). His reign, though prosperous, was very brief, and he had to contend against his brothers, who endeavoured to establish their claims to the throne by force of arms, but were defeated in every encounter. He was equally successful against the Christians, and, in 791, compelled Bermudo, king of Asturias, to conclude a humiliating peace. His generals penetrated into France as far as Carcassonne, and seized Narbonne, which was plundered and burned. On their return, Hisham devoted one-fifth of the booty they brought with them to the completion of the great mosque commenced by his father.

Hisham was succeeded by his son Al-hakem (796-822), whose reign was very much disturbed; for immediately after his father's death his uncles again came forward to assert their right to the succession; but again they were unsuccessful: one of them was killed in battle, and the other, though pardoned, was exiled into Africa. But Al-hakem, notwithstanding these successes, appears to have been disliked by his subjects, for insurrections broke out not only at Toledo, but in his own capital, and in putting them down he indulged in the most merciless cruelty. In 818, he was so exasperated by a slight disturbance in one of the suburbs of Cordova, that he ordered it to be rased to the ground, and its inhabitants, about 40,000 in number, to be transported into Africa. A considerable number of these wretched exiles passed into Egypt, and thence seized the island of Crete, of which they retained possession until 961.

Al-hakem's successor was his son Abd-el-rhaman II. (822-852). He, too, had at first to contend against his great-uncle, who, returning from Africa, endeavoured to gain the succession for himself, but again failed in his ambitious enterprise. In his wars against the Christians, Abd-el-rhaman was more successful than his predecessors: in 827, he took Barcelona from the Franks, and in 839, a Mahomedan fleet burned the suburbs of Marseilles. In the year 844, a band of Scandinavian Normans who had already infested the coasts of England, Germany, and France, appeared for the first time in Spain. In the internal administration of his dominions, Abd-el-rhaman displayed no less care and activity than in his wars, for he built mosques and colleges, made roads and canals to promote commerce and agriculture, and was an enthusiastic promoter of literature and science, which he treated with unexampled liberality.

His son and successor, Mahomed I. (852-886), had a long but anything but glorious reign, for he not only provoked his own subjects to rebellion, but was unable to check the progress of the Christians, who under Alfonso III. made inroads into the very heart of the Mahomedan dominions. Alfonso, whose hereditary dominions embraced Galicia and Asturias, added to them by conquest Leon, Castille, Estremadura, and a great part of Lusitania. These losses of the Mahomedans were increased by a fresh invasion of the Normans in 860, by a great drought in 867, and followed by a pestilence, and by an earthquake which swallowed up several towns in 881.

Almund-her (886-888), his son, had to contend against the rebel Calib, who during his father's reign had been suffered to conduct the government of Toledo almost as an independent sovereign, and now defeated and slew Almud-her in open battle. His brother Abdallah (888-912) had not only to continue the war against Calib, but to fight against his own sons, who, however, were defeated after a short campaign and fell into his hands: one of them was strangled in a dungeon, while

Kasim the younger was spared. Abdallah appointed his grandson Abd-el-rhaman III. his successor.

Abd-el-rhaman III. (912-961), was unquestionably the greatest ruler that ever appeared among the Spanish Arabs. Even in his early days, his gentleness, generosity, and love of learning, had made him extremely popular among his countrymen ; so that, although in point of right others might have claimed the succession, his appointment was received with general satisfaction. The first care of his long reign was to clear the country of the rebels who, under his predecessors, had made themselves masters of the best parts of Spain. Calib, who was still maintaining himself, had even contrived to obtain the assistance of the Christians, and with their aid extended his sway over the most fertile parts of the peninsula. Abd-el-rhaman III., who now began war against him in good earnest, chased him from fortress to fortress, dispersed his armies or cut them to pieces, and compelled their rebellious chief to take refuge in disguise in the mountains of Aragon, from which he never returned. Calib's two sons afterwards endeavoured to renew the war against their legitimate ruler, but their plans were thwarted, and Toledo, like other towns espousing the cause of the rebels, was compelled, in 944, to capitulate. In his endeavours to check the progress of the Christians, Abd-el-rhaman was equally successful ; he defeated Ramiro II. and Ordoño II., kings of Leon, and thus secured his dominions for a long time against attacks from that quarter. Another still greater success was the conquest of a large portion of Mauritania in Africa, with its capital of Fez, which he wrested from the Idrisites.

Mahomedan Spain had been politically independent of the eastern caliphs ever since the accession of the Ommyyades, but in religious matters the caliph still maintained his supremacy, until Abd-el-rhaman III., elated with his victories, shook off the yoke which still bound Spain to the east, and assumed

himself the title of caliph and imam. When this was accomplished, he devoted himself entirely to the enlargement and embellishment of his capital, and to promoting the welfare of his subjects in every way he could. His additions to the great mosque at Cordova, the foundation of the town and palace of Az-zahra, with its 4300 marble pillars, and of several colleges and schools, the formation of a large library in his palace, the construction of roads, canals, and aqueducts, attest his taste for luxury, his love of literature and the arts, and his untiring activity. In the administration of justice he seems to have acted with the sternness of an ancient Roman, for he had one of his own sons tried and executed for having aimed at the life of a brother, whom Abd-el-rhaman had appointed to succeed him.

Under Abd-el-rhaman III. and his immediate successors, Mahomedan Spain reached its highest prosperity and eminence. About that time the country south of the Duero is said to have contained eighty large cities and nearly thirty millions of inhabitants. The capital Cordova alone had upwards of a million, 600 mosques, eighty public schools, and a university with a library of 600,000 volumes. The splendour of the court and the royal palaces appears to us almost fabulous. Agriculture, mining, trade and commerce, especially with Constantinople, were in a most flourishing condition; architecture and poetry, and, among the sciences, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, and medicine, reached a height among the Moors scarcely approached by any other nation of that period.

Abd-el-rhaman III. was succeeded by his son Al-hakem (961-976), who besides the brilliant qualities of his father was passionately fond of literature. His reign was comparatively tranquil, for the Christians hardly stirred, and his policy was to protect his recent conquests in Mauritania rather than to increase them by engaging in fresh wars; so that he had ample leisure to devote himself to the promotion of science, literature, and the prosperity of his people. His reign fully deserves the

name it commonly bears, the golden age of Arabian literature in Spain. His liberality in founding and endowing schools and colleges attracted scholars and learned men from all parts of Europe.

When Al-hakem died, his son Hisham was not yet eleven years old, and Al-mansur, who had held a high office under his father, contrived to gain the affections of the young prince, and confined him to his seraglio, ruling in his name, and assuming himself all the pomp of royalty, so that some historians actually speak of him as a king who had usurped the throne. But his talents as a ruler and commander of the armies he led against the Christians were not inferior to his unbridled ambition. He is said to have undertaken no less than twenty-seven expeditions into the Christian countries, and to have penetrated into their very heart : he seems in fact to have set himself the task of making himself master of all Spain. He advanced as far as Santiago, which he took in 985, and having penetrated within the precincts of Compostella, he took away the bells of the church, and sent them to Cordova to be melted into lamps for the great mosque. In Africa, too, Al-mansur extended his dominions, and the twenty-six years of his reign are, in a military point of view, the most brilliant period of the Mahomedans in Spain. Throughout his reign he is described as brave, generous, and just. He died in 1001, it is said, of grief at having sustained a defeat, leaving the government in the hands of his son Abd-el-malek, who ruled as absolutely as his father, still keeping the lawful sovereign in confinement. But he was inferior to his father in talent and military skill, and in his undertakings against the Christians as well as in his internal administration he was generally unsuccessful. He died in 1008, apparently by poison. But Hisham still did not succeed to the throne of his father, the reins of government being seized by Abd-el-rhman, a brother of Abd-el-Malek, who, following the example of his two predecessors, forced Hisham

to lead a life of debauchery and licentiousness. As the latter had no children, Abd-el-rhaman endeavoured to legalize his dynasty by persuading Hisham to declare him his lawful successor. But this inconsiderate act aroused the members of Hisham's family, and Mahomed, one of them, proceeding to the frontiers, there assembled an army with which he advanced upon Cordova. The city was invested, and Abd-el-rhaman, being deserted by his friends, was taken prisoner and nailed on a cross in 1009.

The ostensible object of this revolution had been to restore Hisham to the throne of his father ; but no sooner had Mahomed overpowered his enemy, than he caused himself to be proclaimed caliph, giving out that Hisham, who was kept in close confinement, had died. Not long after this, Suleyman, another prince of the blood-royal, appeared at the head of the African guard, and after defeating Mahomed gained possession of Cordova. A few months later, Mahomed indeed succeeded in effecting his return, but the populace of the city literally tore him to pieces, and sent his head into the camp of Suleyman, 1010. The latter now undertook the government in the name of Hisham, who, however, according to some authorities, was secretly put to death.

These disastrous internal convulsions were naturally followed by a rapid decline of the Mahomedan power in Spain. The governors of the various provinces, refusing to acknowledge the authority of a capital which submitted to any daring rebel, declared themselves independent of the rulers of Cordova. The Moorish dominions were thus cut up into a number of petty kingdoms, which in their isolation and weakness, and their perpetual wars with one another, were easily overpowered by the Christians. The throne of Cordova was occupied by a succession of adventurers, who killed, assassinated, or expelled one another, and Hisham III., the last of the Ommiyade dynasty, died in 1031. This event was the signal for all the ambitious

governors throughout Spain to cast aside their allegiance to Cordova, and assume the title and position of independent rulers. Seville, Malaga, Granada, Valencia, Badajoz with the whole of Estremadura, Saragossa with Huesca and the greater part of Aragon, Toledo, Cordova, and many other towns of inferior rank, now formed independent kingdoms. It would be a tedious task to enter into the history of these, some of which had only an ephemeral existence, and none lasted longer than a century ; suffice it to say, that after a succession of bloody civil wars most of the smaller kingdoms were incorporated with one or other of the more powerful, so that at the end of the eleventh century only four remained, which were grouped round the capitals of Seville, Toledo, Saragossa, and Badajoz. During this wretched period, large portions of Mahomedan Spain fell into the hands of the Christians, who abstained from hostilities among themselves, and made good use of the troubles among the infidels. Toledo, after a siege of three years, was compelled, in 1085, to surrender to Alfonso VI. of Castile, who now entered the ancient capital of the Visigoths, and would have pushed his conquests still farther, had not a great revolution changed the aspect of the whole peninsula.

About the middle of the eleventh century, several of the pagan tribes about Mount Atlas had been converted to Mahomedanism by learned members of the family of the Almoravides. Abdallah, one of their instructors, having inculcated upon the converts the duty of spreading the new religion by every means in their power, prevailed upon them to make war upon the neighbouring tribes. Many of the latter were gradually subdued, and, united with their conquerors, they assumed the name of Almoravides. Abdallah now took the title of Emir, and was succeeded by Abu-bekr, who undertook the conquest of northern Africa. His cousin Yusef made himself master of Fez and the greater part of Mauritania, and as early as the year

1073, the power of the Almoravides was recognised throughout the northern parts of Africa, and at some points extended very far into the interior. When the Mahomedan rulers of Spain were hard pressed by the victorious Alfonso VI., they applied to the Almoravides for assistance. Yusef eagerly seized the opportunity of increasing his conquests ; in 1086, he crossed over with a powerful army, and meeting Alfonso not far from Badajoz gained a brilliant victory, which, combined with some other successful enterprises, completely stopped the progress of the Christians. But Yusef, following the example of the first Moors in Spain, was found to be a more dangerous enemy to his allies than the Christians had been ; for being pleased with the beauty, wealth, and fertility of Spain, he turned his arms against the very people whom he ought to have protected, and by treachery and violence succeeded in establishing his supremacy in the country, which thus, in 1087, became a dependency of the African empire of Morocco. Yusef, the first monarch of the dynasty of Almoravides, died in Morocco in 1106.

3. The Spanish chronicles relate the popular tradition, that Pelayo, a noble Visigoth, at the time when the Mahomedans conquered the south of Spain, took refuge in the wild mountains of Asturias, and that, being regarded by the Visigoths as their bravest champion against the Moors, he was proclaimed king of Asturias. Arabic authorities also mention Pelayo as the founder of an independent Christian kingdom in the north. The time of his proclamation is generally assumed to be the year 718. During the same period, a duke Peter, of the royal family of Reccared, is mentioned as an independent prince in the mountains of Biscay. His son Alfonso, or Alonso, married a daughter of Pelayo, and as Pelayo's own son died early, Alfonso was elected king of Asturias, whereby the two principalities of Asturias and Biscay were united ; and having subsequently conquered Galicia, his kingdom extended along the whole of the north coast of Spain. He then advanced across the Minho and

Duero as far as Oporto and Salamanca, cut to pieces the Arab garrisons of the towns, and liberated large numbers of Christian captives, whom he took with him into his own kingdom. All the country, from Astorga as far as the fertile plain of Rioja on the Upper Duero, remained subject to Alfonso, whom his own people honoured with the surname of the Catholic. He died about 757; his successors were all members of his family, but were elected by the nobles. The love of freedom and independence, which characterized the mountaineers in the north of Spain, from Galicia to Biscay, gave rise even from the first to constant rebellions and insurrections; but the wars against the Moors were nevertheless continued with unabated vigour. Alfonso II. (791-842) advanced as far as the Tajo, and secured his conquests at least as far as the Minho. He entered into connexion with Charlemagne, and made Oviedo, which had been founded in 762, his capital and the see of a bishop. Alfonso restored the ancient Visigothic constitution, both in the state and in the church, and particularly encouraged local or municipal self-government. The apostle St. James was believed to have introduced Christianity into Spain; and when in the reign of Alfonso II. the apostle's body, or what was regarded as such, was discovered in Galicia, a church was founded on the spot, which formed the nucleus of the town of Santiago de Compostella. Under the successors of this illustrious king, the prosperity of the towns and cities was promoted, and the frontiers were secured and extended.

Alfonso III., surnamed the Great (866-910), had to contend against the counts within his own dominions, but succeeded without much difficulty in subduing them; and after securing peace with them, and strengthening himself against the ambitious encroachments of the French, he resumed the war against the Moors; during thirty years of continual warfare his arms were always victorious. But he was less fortunate against the enemies that sprang up within his own family. His

son Garcia, aided by the ever-rebellious counts, and even by his mother and brother, formed a conspiracy to dethrone the aged king. The insurgents were defeated, and Garcia thrown into prison; but the friends of the rebel son, representing him as an innocent victim, and his father as a cruel tyrant, were on the point of calling forth a civil war. To avert this calamity, Alfonso, in 910, abdicated in favour of Garcia, but gave Galicia to his second son Ordovo, and Oviedo to Fruela, the youngest. Garcia made Leon his capital, whence his dominion sometimes bears the name of the kingdom of Leon. This division of the kingdom of Asturias took place at a very inopportune time, as the aggressive movements of the Moors in the south began to be alarming; but fortunately both the other kingdoms were soon reunited with Leon. Rebellions among the mountaineers also continued to break out again and again, and the eastern Christians as well as the Moors profited by these disorders, until at length, a few years before the extinction of the house of Asturias or Leon, Sancho the Great of Navarre, in 1034, succeeded in conquering Leon, and thereby made himself the ruler of all the Christian states of the peninsula, with the exception of Barcelona.

4. The province of Bardulia, which even in the reign of Alfonso I. of Asturias had been placed by him under a count, and under Alfonso III. took the name of Castile, from the great number of castles erected in it, had gradually been endeavouring to make itself independent. Still, however, even as late as the year 1000, Count Sancho acknowledged, at least nominally, the king of Leon as his sovereign. But when Sancho had died and his son been murdered, the husband of Sancho's sister, Sancho the Great of Navarre, took possession of Castile, and gave it to his son Ferdinand as an independent kingdom (1035-1065). Ferdinand became involved in a war with Bermudo, the last king of Leon, who was defeated and slain in battle in 1037, whereupon Leon and Castile were united as one kingdom. But

this union did not last long, for under Ferdinand's sons, in 1065, they were again separated.

5. Navarre, at the north-western extremity of the Pyrenees, was particularly important on account of its mountain pass of Roncesvalles, which forms the shortest road from St. Jean Pied de Port by Pampeluna down to the Ebro. In this district a branch of the Basque nation had again and again asserted its independence, first against the Moors and afterwards against the Franks, who for a time made themselves masters of this gate between France and Spain. When, however, the Frankish monarchy began to decay, an independent Basque kingdom was formed in 905 by Sancho I., at a time when the western Christian kingdoms did not permit its boundaries to be extended westward. But a little more than a century later Sancho the Great (1000-1035) succeeded in extending his little kingdom of Navarre over nearly the whole of Christian Spain. This union of all the Christian states, however, as already observed, did not last, for, in 1034, he was obliged to divide his kingdom between his sons. Castile (which was united with Leon from 1037 to 1065) then became a separate kingdom; Aragon also now for the first time renounced its connexion with Navarre, and Navarre itself was soon after divided between Castile and Aragon, until, in 1134, it again became an independent state.

6. The county of Aragon, like Navarre, was, in its origin, a very insignificant district in the Spanish highlands. There too a natural road connects France with Spain, running from the town of Iaca to the upper Aragon, a tributary of the Ebro, across the Pic du Midi towards Pau on the Gave. The counts of Iaca, who bore the title of counts of Aragon as early as the beginning of the ninth century, guarded the frontiers of France against the Saracens. Sancho I. of Navarre incorporated the county of Aragon with his kingdom; but after the death of Sancho the Great, in 1035, the desire for independence revived

among the Aragonese. They were a mixed race ; but living in the solitude of their mountains and valleys, and being engaged in repeated struggles against the Moors, through whom alone they kept up a connexion with the world without, they had gradually amalgamated as one nation or tribe, which maintained a proud independence of all around them. Ramiro, a son of Sancho the Great, became the first king of Aragon in 1035. Twenty-eight years later the frontiers were extended as far as the Ebro, though they did not yet comprise Saragossa ; but notwithstanding these prosperous beginnings, Aragon became, in 1137, a province of Catalonia under the count of Barcelona. Although the Aragonese and the Catalonians were people of very different character, the latter being much more highly civilized through their commerce and intercourse with other nations, yet the union became permanent, and forms the beginning of a new period in the history of those countries.

7. The Spanish march, which had been instituted by Charlemagne, was soon afterwards reduced in extent by the progress of the Moors. According to Germanic usage, the country was divided into several counties, but the count of Barcelona was always looked upon as the chief protector of the whole country against the Mahomedans. The spirit of independence was strongly developed among the people, as their country was protected on one side by the Pyrenees, while on the south-west the sea fostered their spirit of liberty and enterprise. In 848, Charles the Bald still appointed a count of Gothia (also called Septimania, between the Pyrenees and the Rhone) and Barcelona ; but after the year 865, Septimania appears separated from Barcelona, and the latter in a state of almost perfect independence. The national character of the inhabitants of the march remained Gothic, though, owing to their commerce and intercourse with other nations, they had received large additions of foreign elements : they formed, as it were, the transition from the stern peculiarities of the real Spaniards to other nations.

About the middle of the eleventh century an assembly of the nobles, convened by Count Berengar I., drew up a code of the national laws, which, under the name of *Usatici Barchinonenses*, remained for seven centuries the basis of the laws and constitution of the country. About the same time the county of Barcelona, after the extinction of the Ommiyade caliphs, was extended partly by conquest and partly by inheritance; from the year 1114 it appears in history under the name of Catalonia.

8. During the wars of Alfonso VI. against the Almoravides, he had been assisted by the Burgundian count Henry, a lineal descendant of the Capetings; and in gratitude for this assistance he gave him his daughter and the county of Portugal, between the lower Tajo and the Minho, as a hereditary fief of the kingdom of Castile (1094). But even Henry's son Alfonso, about 1112, made himself independent of Castile, and successfully engaged in wars against the Moors.

After the dissolution of the Spanish caliphate about 1035, when, through the influence of Sancho the Great, the Christian states had become united against their common enemy, the wars against the Moors were carried on from the central parts of the peninsula with great enthusiasm and success. Ferdinand I. or the Great of Castile, and his sons Sancho II. and Alfonso VI. (1066-1109), extended their conquests even beyond Coimbra and Madrid; Alfonso VI. even gained possession of Toledo, the ancient capital of the Visigoths, and thus inflicted a severe blow upon the Mahomedans. The most celebrated Christian warrior during the reign of these three kings, was Rodrigo or Ruy Diaz, whom the admiration of the Christians conceived as the *beau idéal* of a Spanish knight, whom his own sovereigns called the campeador, or the champion, and whom the vanquished enemy respectfully styled the Cid, or their lord. The detail of his history is much interwoven with fable and fiction, but the poetry which made him the popular hero of the Christians, spread his chivalrous spirit far and wide in the countries of the

West, and greatly contributed to kindle the enthusiasm which urged the Christians to wrest from the hands of the infidels the land in which Christ had lived and taught and suffered.

CHAPTER X.

THE MAHOMEDAN STATES IN ASIA AND AFRICA.

1. The Abbasides and the Emir-al-Omra; 2. Asiatic dynasties independent of the caliphate; 3. African dynasties independent of the caliphate; 4. The Seljuks and Fatimides; 5. Civilisation of the Mahomedans.

1. IT has already been stated, that in the year 750 the Ommiyade caliphs were overthrown, and that their place was occupied by the Abbasides, or descendants of Abbas. Even the first ruler of the new dynasty, Abul Abbas, who filled the throne only three years, left the business of the government to a vizier, or minister, of the Persian family of the Barmekides, who maintained themselves in their position during several reigns. Abul Abbas was succeeded by his brother Al-Mansur (753-774), the founder of the splendid city of Bagdad, which now became the capital of the caliphate. In his reign, as well as those of his two successors, wars were carried on in Asia Minor against the Greek empire, and in the east against the Turcomans, in which the generals of the caliphs were successful; but the internal tranquillity of the empire was often disturbed by insurrections in distant provinces.

The third caliph after Abul Abbas was the celebrated Harun-al-Raschid (786-808), a grandson of Al-Mansur, who had distinguished himself as a young man in the wars against the Greeks, and had advanced as far as the Hellespont. When he had ascended the throne, he showed himself as active in pro-

moting the arts and literature as he had done before in conquering his foes. His reign is generally described as marked by his love of peace and justice. He entered into friendly relations with Charlemagne, to whom he sent some valuable presents, and among them a curious kind of clock and some highly revered Christian relics, which are believed to be still preserved in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. In conducting the administration of his empire, he was chiefly guided by his Barmekide viziers, Jahya and Jafar ; but the high degree of popularity they enjoyed at last aroused his jealousy, and the reckless cruelty with which he gave way to his suspicions and put to death not only the ministers themselves, but nearly all their relations, forms a strange contrast with the mildness and fairness generally ascribed to him by Arab historians. His reign, however, is in truth the beginning of the most flourishing period of Arab literature, which he encouraged by great liberality towards poets and men of learning and science ; under him Bagdad rose to such splendour as even to eclipse Constantinople. For these reasons both contemporary and later writers describe Harun-al-Raschid as the very pattern of an eastern monarch, and many of the glowing pictures in the "Arabian Nights" are lively representations of Bagdad and its court during this period. The emperor Nicephorus I., who refused to pay the customary tribute, was compelled by a war of several years' duration, to comply with the demands of Harun-al-Raschid. Even this great monarch, however, was unable to prevent insurrections of the governors of distant provinces, and it was during an expedition against the disloyal satrap of Khorasan, in 808, that Harun-al-Raschid died.

Some time before his death, he had divided his empire among his three sons ; but when afterwards he altered the arrangement then made, the new division became the source of bloody feuds among the brothers, which were fostered by the ever increasing sectarian spirit, arising from speculations about mysterious

theological points, and by the spreading of luxury and effeminacy. In 813, however, Mamun, one of the brothers, obtained the undisputed possession of the caliphate, and maintained himself on the throne for twenty years. His reign, like that of his father, is celebrated for the liberality with which he treated science and literature, and for the colleges, libraries, and observatories which he established in the principal cities of his dominions. Greeks and Hindus contributed their share to the literary glory of the period, for many of their works were translated into Arabic. But the splendour which surrounds the reign of Harun-al-Raschid and his son Mamun, soon passed away under the voluptuous indolence of their successors. Several of the provinces of the West, as Spain and Morocco, were already quite independent of the caliph, and some of the eastern provinces threatened to follow their example. In the north the caliphate was in danger of being invaded by the Turks, some of whom, called Turcomans, had already been compelled to adopt the Mahomedan religion. In consequence of this, many converted Turks were brought to Bagdad as mercenaries, and Motasem (833-842), the brother and successor of Mamun, formed of them his body-guard, which was soon after raised to the number of 50,000 men, and became to the caliphs what the prætorians had been to the Roman emperors. Mostain, (862-866), who owed his throne to them, was obliged to concede to them the right of electing their own commander, and had thus to give up one of his most valuable prerogatives. At this same time the western provinces of the caliphate were successfully attacked by the Greeks, and an adventurer, Yakub-al-Laith, made himself master of Khorasan, Kerman, Persia proper, and Khuzistan, which provinces he united into an independent kingdom. It remained in his family until the year 917, and his dynasty is known by the name of the Zaffarides, from Zaffar (a brazier), because Yakub was believed to be the son of a brazier.

The caliphate decayed rapidly ; about the year 900, the caliphs entirely withdrew into their harem, and their power sank so low that an Arab historian declares it to have been reduced to almost nothing ; for the ruler of the faithful, having lost nearly all his provinces, had scarcely any authority even in his own capital ; the treasury was exhausted, and few of the tributes were paid into it. At last the caliph Rhadi (934-940), for the sake of restoring peace and order, was obliged to call Mahomed ben Rayek, one of his governors, to Bagdad, and intrust to him almost unlimited power, with the title of Emir-al-Omra, that is, commander of commanders. From this time the caliphate became a mere nominal dignity, all the real powers being concentrated in the hands of the Emirs-al-Omra, and the caliph himself retaining only a sort of pontificate or supremacy in religious and ecclesiastical affairs. But the important office of Emir-al-Omra became the cause of bloody struggles among the aspirants to it. A powerful member of the family of the Buides, who had made themselves masters of Persia and Iran, dethroned one caliph and set up another in 945, reserving for himself the office of Emir-al-Omra, which henceforth remained hereditary in his family until the year 1056, when Bagdad was occupied by the Seljuks under Togrul Beg, in whose family the office afterwards remained until 1152. The Buides, being a Persian family, and having all the advantages of the higher civilisation of the Persians, exercised their power with much more wisdom and moderation than the Seljuks afterwards ; but still they left the caliphs so little power, that the latter were proverbially said to have nothing but the honour of being mentioned in the prayers, and the right to coin money. Notwithstanding this state of degradation, however, the Abbaside caliphs maintained themselves at Bagdad till about the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Tatars put an end to their dynasty.

While the power of the Sunnite or orthodox Abbasides was

sinking lower and lower, until at last the Buides, who were Shiites or heretics, made them entirely dependent on themselves ; several dynasties, founded in the eastern and western provinces by fanatical and warlike chiefs, were struggling for independence. The most important among these, next to the Buides, were the Samanides, in the east of Iran and Turan, who afterwards had to succumb to the Ghaznavides ; but shortly before the end of the eleventh century both the Buides and Ghaznavides were overpowered by the Sunnite Seljuks. In Africa, the dynasties of the Edrisites and Aglabites, which had existed there ever since the time of Harun-al-Raschid, were overthrown by the Shiite Fatimides, who, about the year 970, made Cairo in Egypt their capital, and from that time, until the period of the Crusades, alternately with the Seljuks, governed the Holy Land.

2. About the year 820, in the reign of Mamun, eastern Persia made itself independent under Taher, one of the caliph's generals ; and his family maintained its independence for a period of fifty years, at the end of which it was overthrown by the above-mentioned dynasty of the Zaffarides. But this new dynasty again had to succumb about the year 900 to that of the Samanides, who boasted descent from the royal house of the Sassanidae, and gained possession of the whole of Persia. Under this dynasty, the first ruler of which was Ismael, Khorasan and Turkestan (Bactria) recovered to some extent their ancient prosperity and the civilisation, with which they had already been blessed twice, first in the remotest ages of human history, and a second time under their Greek rulers after the time of Alexander the Great. Bokhara, the capital of the Samanides, and the towns of Samarkand, Balk, and Herat, became centres of an extensive commerce and seats of art, industry, and learning ; and the great schools of Bokhara and Samarkand were in constant communication with similar institutions at Alexandria and Damascus. In the reign of the

Samanide Nasser (914-943), the poet Rudeki compiled an anthology of Arabic, Persian, and Indian poetry. The reign of the same prince is remarkable for the institution of dervishes, a sort of Mahomedan monks. But the prosperity of this empire, like that of most oriental states, was not of long duration; and after the reign of Nasser the Samanide empire fell into rapid decay, the main cause being that the military commanders assumed the right to confer the kingly dignity on whomsoever they pleased. One of these generals, the Turk Alptekin, made himself the independent ruler of Ghazna on the frontiers of India, and thence extended his dominions in all directions. Mahmud I., the ablest and wisest of the Ghaznavides, overthrew, in 900, the dominion of the Samanides, who had then been the rulers of a vast empire for nearly a century. Mahmud was the son of a distinguished soldier in the army of Alptekin, and may be regarded as the founder of the empire of Ghazna. In the year 1001, Mahmud occupied Kabul and Peshawur, and thence advanced across the Indus, conquered the whole of the Punjaub and the peninsula of Gujerat, and penetrated even as far as the Ganges. Through him Mahomedanism was spread in India, and the commercial intercourse between India and the West was restored, which once more raised Bactria to a high state of prosperity. Two years before his death, which took place in 1031, Mahmud subdued one line of the powerful family of the Buides, while the other still maintained itself at Bagdad until the year 1056, when it was overthrown by the Seljuks. These Seljuks were a Turkish race, which about 970 had embraced the Sunnite doctrines of Mahomedanism; they had taken Bokhara from the Samanides, and assisted Mahmud in overthrowing their empire. After the reign of Mahmud, the Ghaznavide empire also sank into a rapid decline, and in the end became itself a prey of the Seljuks.

About 900, the Hamadanides, who had been governors of Syria, made themselves independent rulers; and under their

mild and beneficent administration Aleppo became one of the most important commercial places in the East, and has remained so down to the present time. Other dynasties which were formed about that time, such as that of the Assassins, are of less importance and may here be passed over.

3. In the western portions of northern Africa, it was difficult for the caliphs of the East to maintain their authority, on account of the hostility of the Spanish Ommyyades to the Abbasides, in consequence of which independent dynasties were formed there at a comparatively early period.

After an insurrection of the Alites in Arabia against the Abbasides, in 785, Edris, one of the insurgents, escaped into the country about Mount Atlas, and, being supported by the Berbers and the Spanish Arabs, founded the kingdom of the Edrisites, of which Fez became the capital. But his dynasty, having given itself up to luxury and learned speculation, was overthrown about 918 by the Fatimides. During the war against the Edrisites, Aglab, an Abbaside general, had founded, in 803, the kingdom of Magreb, of which Tunis became the capital; and his descendants, called after him Aglabites, commenced the conquest of Sicily. But the kingdom established by him lasted little more than a century, for the Fatimides who lived in Magreb rose in arms and exterminated the whole family of the Aglabites in 910. The Fatimides thus became the rulers of a considerable empire in the north-west of Africa, and assumed the title of Emirs-al-Munemin (rulers of the faithful), though they were Shiites. After the Fatimides had conquered nearly the whole of north-western Africa, they at length, in 970, made themselves masters of Egypt, which was then still a wealthy and highly cultivated country. There they founded Cairo (city of victory), and took up their residence in it. Magreb, being exposed to attacks from the Spanish Ommyyades, was intrusted to the administration and protection of a special satrap, but this precaution could not prevent

new dynasties springing up at Algiers and Morocco, which were sometimes willing to support the Ommiyades and sometimes the Fatimides ; and during the disputes among them the Arab dominion in Sicily also was broken up and several small principalities were formed, which in the end enabled the Normans to make themselves masters of the island. The dynasty of the Almoravides at Morocco was founded in 1070, and seventeen years later, as we have stated already, made Moorish Spain a province of their empire.

4. After the death of the powerful Mahmud I., in 1051, when the Ghaznavide empire began to decay, the Seljuks, advancing from Turan, invaded Khorasan and thence spread over the empire of Ghazna ; as early as 1039, their ruler Togrul Beg styled himself Sultan of eastern Persia ; and after having made himself master of Ispahan, waited only for an opportunity of overthrowing the Buides, who, indeed, still possessed the great office of emir-al-omra, but had already been reduced to a state of dependence by their Turkish mercenaries. What Togrul Beg expected, soon came to pass ; for when, in 1055, Basasiry, the commander of the caliph's body-guard, and a zealous Shiite, had usurped the supreme power at Bagdad, and entered into connexion with the Shiite Fatimides in Egypt, with whose aid he hoped to secure the supremacy to his doctrines, the caliph and his emir-al-omra invoked the assistance of the orthodox Togrul Beg. The latter eagerly seized the opportunity, but instead of doing what he had promised, he ordered the last Buide to be thrown into prison, and caused himself to be nominated emir-al-omra, a step which the caliph himself was obliged to sanction. Basasiry had in the meantime caused the Fatimide Mostanser to be proclaimed caliph, but was abandoned by his friends and put to death. When Togrul Beg died, in 1063, he was succeeded by his nephew Alp Arslan as sultan and emir-al-omra, so that the latter office now became hereditary in the dynasty of the Seljuks. The

new ruler defeated the Greek emperor Romanus IV., and drove the Fatimides out of Egypt and Syria, of which latter country they had taken possession. The third Seljuk sultan, Malek Shah, made Ispahan his capital, and extended his empire not only over Turan, but even over the highlands of central Asia, as far as the frontiers of China. Before his death, in 1092, he divided his vast dominions, extending from China to the Mediterranean and the western boundary of Egypt, so that at the commencement of the Crusades we find a number of smaller Seljuk empires, such as those of Iran, Kerman, Iconium, Damascus, and Aleppo. In order to secure the respect of their Arab subjects, even the rude Seljuk rulers had found it advisable to follow the example of their predecessors in patronizing the arts and sciences ; but the administration of their dominions was generally left to their vizirs, some of whom acquired a great reputation as learned men and promoters of the arts of peace.

Ever since the year 970, when the Fatimides took up their residence at Cairo, they had adapted their administration to the peculiar necessities of Egypt : by protecting landed property and by other means they raised agriculture ; and when they had conquered nearly the whole of northern Africa, Sicily, and Syria, and even the coast of Arabia, including Mecca, the commerce of Egypt was so immensely increased, that the country enjoyed a prosperity such as it has never attained since. The Fatimides, like all other true Arab dynasties, were zealous promoters of science and learning.

When the kingdom of the Hamadanides in Syria was in its decay, the Fatimides took possession of Aleppo, and a few years later the fanatical zeal of the Fatimide sultan Al Hakem, who reigned till 1021, forbade the Christians to visit the holy sepulchre as pilgrims, and thereby caused great excitement throughout the Christian world. About 1040, the chief power of the Fatimide sultans passed into the hands of an officer who in Egypt took the title of Vizir ; the manner in which this change

was brought about, resembled that in which the power of the caliphs of Bagdad had been transferred to the emirs-al-omra ; and the innovation was followed by similar misfortunes, during which, in 1072, Syria and Palestine fell into the hands of the neighbouring Seljuk rulers and other Turks. The ill treatment which the Christian pilgrims had to endure from the rude hordes of Turks, one of whom, Ortok, became the ruler of Jerusalem in 1084, was one of the chief causes that led to the Crusades. In the year 1096, however, the Fatimides again succeeded in wresting the holy city from the Turks.

5. Through its wars, as well as through the peaceful intercourse with other nations, Mahomedanism exercised a vast influence, and in its way contributed much towards the advancement of mankind. Nearly all the Asiatic nations, from China to the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and the whole of northern Africa to the shores of the Atlantic, including Spain and several of the islands of the Mediterranean, were united by one religion ; and while in some countries, as in Africa, this religion checked the awful practice of human sacrifices, it helped in others to promote the cultivation of literature, science, and art. It must be owned that at the beginning of the Crusades intellectual culture was in many respects much higher among the Mahomedans than among the Christian nations. But the great influence exercised by the Arabs on the development of mankind, showed itself more particularly under the dynasty of the Abbasides, when they began to make themselves acquainted by means of translations with the literature of ancient Greece, and the poetry and philosophy of the Persians and Indians. It was this peculiar combination of oriental elements, which cannot be called pure Arabic culture, that during the conflict between the East and the West spread over the south of Europe, and commenced exercising its influence on European civilisation.

It has already been remarked that the Arabs in their own

country, from very early times, possessed considerable poetical talent, and that they were aided in their poetical compositions by a finely developed language. The most ancient works in their literature known to us are poems, which were recited before public assemblies ; their authors were rewarded with prizes, and the poems preserved in the Caaba. Mahomed's poetical rhapsodies in the Koran and Ali's fiery discourses gave a fresh impulse to the nation ; and when the Koran was once committed to writing, and the art had become familiar to the people, ancient national legends and poems were collected in divans or anthologies, the most ancient of which is that made by Abu Theman about the year 800.

The influence of foreign nations on the literature of the Arabs began about the time when the Ommiyade caliphs made Damascus their capital, for the partially Hellenized Syrians, whose language is closely related to the Arabic, formed the connecting link between the Greeks and the Arabs. When the caliphate from a patriarchal government became an empire and a sort of pontificate under Moawiyah, the new court was under the necessity of patronizing science, as it originated a new organization of the empire. The court of the Ommiyades, therefore, became the rallying-point of poets, and such sciences as were applicable to practical life were zealously encouraged. Moawiyah himself took into his service Greeks and Syrians to keep the accounts, to survey his dominions, and superintend the erection of public buildings. Medicine, however, was the science most diligently cultivated by the Arabs, and this had become the more necessary, because the people, spreading over different countries and climates, and indulging in new luxuries, were attacked by various new diseases. The Abbasides, therefore, invited Greek physicians, who directed attention to the study of the natural sciences, philosophy, and mathematics, and to such writers as Aristotle, Euclid, and Ptolemy. Chemistry was cultivated by the Arabs as early as the year 765 ;

algebra received its name from them, although it had been known to the Greeks ; in mathematics, astronomy, and geography, the Arabs advanced much further than had been possible for the Greeks, and their works are the most valuable contributions towards the geography of the middle ages. During the disputes between the Sunnites and Shiites, as early as the eighth century, a kind of Mahomedan theology was developed, which dived into the subtlest and nicest distinctions. Connected with this was a kind of jurisprudence based on the Koran, and the study of grammar and philology, for the purpose of arriving at a right interpretation of the sacred book.

The study of Aristotle, whose dialectical eminence had special attractions for the quick and sagacious mind of the Arabs, gave to their science and philosophy that peculiar character which through their schools found its way also into the philosophy of medieval Christianity. Persian and Indian ideas began to spread among the Mahomedans as early as the tenth century, and the Indian influence was exercised more especially through the writings of Ahmed ben Yahia, who was indeed called a heretic and infidel, but nevertheless lived at the court of the caliph about the year 900. The poetry of the Arabs was more particularly influenced by the higher civilisation of the Persians. Fairy tales, so peculiar to the Arabs, had frequently been collected ever since the days of Harun-al-Raschid, the most celebrated of these collections being that known under the name of the Arabian Nights ; but the Ghaznavide, Mahmud I., liberally and actively fostered the interest which was awakening among the Persians in philosophy, history, mathematics, and astronomy, as well as in poetry. The poet Firdusi lived at his court, and it was at the sovereign's request that he celebrated the exploits of the ancient Persian kings in a great epic poem. When afterwards Firdusi thought himself insufficiently rewarded by Mahmud and left him, he found a welcome reception at the court of Bagdad.

It was not in one department only, nor at one court of the Mahomedan states that intellectual culture was fostered, for all the dynasties of the ninth and tenth centuries encouraged literature more or less; all of them, moreover, gave to their dominions a suitable organization, and advanced civilisation by promoting intercourse among the nations. Even the first Ommyyades made extensive postal arrangements, and the father of Harun-al-Raschid ordered milestones and caravanseries to be established along the whole road from Bagdad to Mecca; and the high roads, with their stations and wells in the desert, were kept in excellent condition throughout the period of the Abbassides. The general respect paid to intellectual culture naturally led to toleration, which was shown towards the Persian fire-worshippers as well as towards Christians; and men of learning, notwithstanding the hostility among the different rulers, were everywhere welcomed and protected, whatever their religious creed might be. Libraries were established in all the principal cities, and schools of a high order existed everywhere in the wide Mahomedan dominions, keeping up a lively communication with one another. About the year 1000, Bokhara was the chief seat of Arab literature and learning; thence Mahmud I. invited learned men to his court, among whom Avicenna has acquired the greatest celebrity. This famous philosopher and physician was born in the neighbourhood of Bokhara, and founding on Galen, created a new system of medical science, which he endeavoured to establish on a philosophical basis. Throughout the middle ages both Mahomedans and Christians regarded him as the greatest teacher of medicine, and as the profoundest philosopher next to Aristotle.

FINIS.





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